NB The novel *Paris Savages* (pgs 0-247) is under permanent embargo and not to be published online. The exegesis (pgs 1-64, 248-260) can be published after one year.

UNIVERSITY of TASMANIA

Paris Savages, a novel, and an accompanying exegesis: "Human zoos" and their aftermath – an examination of the archive and the place for fiction

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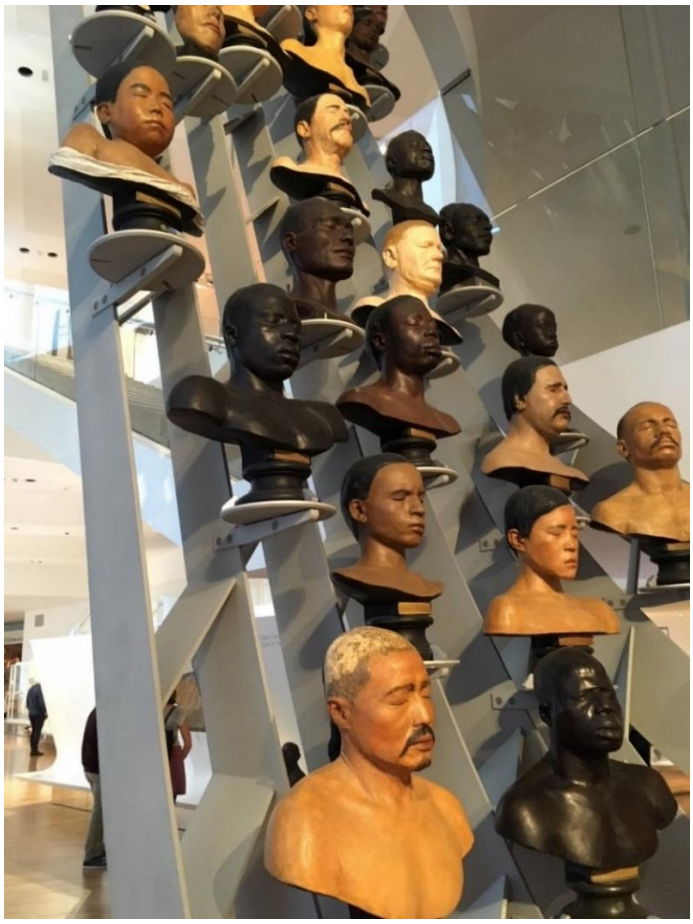

Cover image: "*Nous et les autres*" exhibition, *Musée de l'Homme*, Paris 2017.
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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Arts (Creative Writing).

December 2018.

Statements and Declarations

Declaration of Originality

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of my knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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The publishers of the extracts relating to the *The Diary of Abraham Ulrikab: Text and Context*, *In the Footsteps of Abraham Ulrikab*, *Fraser Island Legends* and *The Legends of Moonie Jarl*, should be contacted regarding access to this material. Permission has been granted for use of the quotations that appear in this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines an aspect of colonial history little known outside academic circles: the ethnographic exhibition, predominantly in Europe and America, of living people promoted as being from far-away lands, "exotic" or "savage". Although research in the last two decades by Poignant, Blanchard, Boëtsch, Bancel, Thode-Arora, Qureshi and others has gathered important historical material about such exhibitions and their role in the construction of racial stereotypes, there remain significant gaps in the record – namely, as Qureshi describes, the paucity of "sources that might be used to reconstruct performers' motivations and perceptions" (9). There also exist gaps in the creative literature, with only a handful of novels having been published that refer to this subject, although not in an Australian context. Such novels include Dominic Smith's *Bright and Distant Shores* and Didier Daeninckx's *Cannibale*. The focus of this dissertation is the exhibition and representation of Australian Aboriginal performers in Europe and America in the late nineteenth century when "human zoos" became mass entertainment. The thesis explores how fiction informed by postcolonial theory might be used to highlight knowledge gaps, challenge racial constructions, and reposition the performers' possible experiences more centrally. Through a novel, *Paris Savages*, it investigates imaginative ways of deconstructing the version of history that exists in the archives, particularly constructed ideas of the objectified "other" as "inferior" and "savage". With a focus on three Badtjala performers in Europe, *Paris Savages* attempts to re-historicise this historical episode by inviting the reader to imagine a more balanced telling. Without first-person performer accounts, it is, of course, impossible to know what the Aboriginal performers each made of this experience. However, I argue that an informed and overtly imaginative approach, inclusive of Aboriginal characters, is a necessary step towards contesting the racial stereotypes the shows produced for, without such attempts at "*rewriting* race and racism, not merely representing, but disturbing [it]" (Hopper), societies born of colonialism will remain locked in their limited histories. Indeed, without re-examining stories that have been half told, "the 'field' of the genuinely *post*-colonial can never *actually* exist" (Slemon 79).

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

> The exhibition of men, with animals or alone, in locations usually reserved for animals, such as zoological gardens, is hardly an anodyne act. And their presentation as specimens of un-evolved and uneducable "races" played a major part in laying down the solid foundations of a popular racism. (Boëtsch and Ardagna 122)

The expression "human zoo" employed by Blanchard et al. in *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage* is used in this dissertation to encapsulate the display of people of difference, in particular "racial" difference, whether at travelling performances, zoological gardens, museums, music halls and American "freak shows" or in the mass international exhibitions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The term is not without its critics, a discussion of which is included in the introduction to the following exegesis. Nevertheless, "human zoo" is a useful descriptor in the context of this study, as it concentrates attention on the predominantly Eurocentric or settler-American representations of performers which, whether pejorative or not, were indisputably "othering", and the impact of these practices on the production of knowledge.

The late nineteenth century was a time of Empire building and rapid change, of increased international trade, burgeoning manufacturing industries, and large-scale infrastructure developments including railway networks that crossed continents. Against this backdrop of significant technological advances and social disruption, "human zoos" served not only to entertain and, it was argued by scientists and showmen of the day, to educate curious citizens, but to reassure them of their own national identities by showing them what they were not. Edward Said's influential text *Orientalism* and its arguments are informative here, if the "Orient" is understood in its extended sense as defining the category of the "other". In Said's words, "The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (*Orientalism* 1-2). Said's theory of representation as power has been central to postcolonial studies and is of direct relevance to the study of "human zoos". Indeed, Blanchard et al. argue that the utility of "human zoos" goes beyond reassurance and national identity formation, to the colonial project itself: "We can propose that exhibitions of the exotic were not, therefore, a consequence of imperialism, but, rather, one of the cultural conditions which made it possible by demonstrating the inferiority of many human groups and thereby legitimizing their future submission" (The Greatest" 15). Although not all people displayed were "colonised subjects" of the nations

showing them, it was a common pattern: the Congolese shown in Belgium (Boffey), Aboriginal people shown in England at the Crystal Palace (Poignant 121-125), First Nations Americans shows in the United States (Rydell 149).

Worldwide, "for more than a century (from the Hottentot Venus in 1810 up until the Second World War in 1940), the exhibition industry attracted over one billion four hundred million spectators and staged somewhere in the range of thirty and thirty-five thousand performers from the four corners of the world" (*ACHAC*, "The Invention"). Many performers, including Australian Aboriginal people, were commonly cast in the "role of anonymous savage other to [the] Western civilised self" (Poignant 8), others as constructed stereotypes of ethnic groups (Dreesbach), which were frequently ranked along an "evolutionary" scale from "savage" to "civilised". However, representations differed among showman, showspaces and nations. Research by Thode-Arora, for example, reveals that, in the German context, not all displays of foreign visitors were negative representations (Pers. interview); indeed, certain portrayals were reverential or admiring (Blanchard, "The Greatest" 20). Some performers, such as the Somalis who appeared in Hagenbeck's Thierpark in Hamburg, returned with other members of their families in subsequent years (Thode-Arora, Pers. interview). Nevertheless, it is significant that accounts of ethnographic shows were heavily biased towards the views of reporters, showmen and scientists (Poignant 8, 118-119), with few accounts written by performers.

A notable exception is the diary of an Inuit man from Labrador, Abraham Ulrikab, whose words were translated by Hartmut Lutz and students from Greifswald University and published as *The Diary of Abraham Ulrikab: Text and Context* in 2005 (Lutz). Researcher Cathrine Baglo has undertaken similar work (forthcoming) translating the experience, as recorded by the "Danish literary Greenland expedition", of a Greenland Inuit performer by the name of Kujagi ("Re: People Shows"). According to Baglo, there are also two known accounts by Sami performers or their relatives ("Re: People Shows"), which, together with other records, provide fascinating insights into examples of the agency of Sami performers, indigenous to the north of Norway, Sweden and Russia ("Rethinking Sami"). However, such instances are dwarfed by the silences of the many thousands of other performers to visit Europe and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Given the large scale of the exhibitions, the focus on "racial" differences, and the paucity of performer voices, it could be argued that "human zoos" were a significant social force influencing ideas of "race" towards the creation and/or entrenchment of stereotypes. In the case of groups such as Australian Aboriginal people, such stereotypes typically leaned

towards the idea of the "savage". Constructions of racial stereotypes have been the focus of recent scholarship, including major exhibitions, such as *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage* at Paris's *Musée du Quai Branly* in 2012 (Thuram) and, more generally, the *Nous et les autres* (Us and others) exhibition at the *Musée de l'Homme*, Paris, in 2017-18 (see Cover image).

This dissertation hypothesises that fiction, informed by aspects of postcolonial theory and criticism, could play a role in not only deconstructing the idea of the "savage" but in contesting it. Here, the reader is empowered as Roland Barthes posits in his essay "The Death of the Author". Barthes argues "the true locus of writing is reading", and it is this observation that is employed in the creative component of this thesis, whereby the reader is implicitly asked to decide who indeed are the "savages" in the story. Are the "savages" the performers or the audience members, the showmen or the scientists doing the anthropological examinations that accompanied them? Indeed, is the idea of the "savage" nothing more than a construction? Included in this thesis is an exegesis, "Human zoos and their aftermath: an examination of the archive and the place for fiction", and a novel, *Paris Savages*. The novel aims to reimagine the story of "human zoos", drawing on the true story of three Badtjala Aboriginal people who were transported to Europe in 1882-83, about which there is scant information.

Sources for both the human-exhibition aspects of the exegesis and the novel include late-nineteenth-century academic texts/journal articles, news reports, advertisements/posters, and German and French museum materials; visits to European exhibition sites; an analysis of relevant works of fiction and recent newspaper and journal articles concerning representation; and interviews with ethnographic, postcolonial and literary scholars in Australia, Germany, France, Norway and Canada. Although the novel *Paris Savages* is, by definition, a work of fiction, I fact-checked drafts of the novel as it relates to Badtjala culture, language and K'gari (Fraser Island) with Badtjala artist and academic Dr Fiona Foley, and I acknowledge her assistance in this regard. Prior to the commencement of this PhD, Dr Foley also acted as a contact point in referring a summary of the proposed novel to members of the Badtjala community, providing them with an opportunity to comment. Additional Badtjala language drawn from the dictionary compiled by Jeanie Bell and Amanda Seed is included, and was updated thanks to the assistance of the language program of the Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation. Extracts of Badtjala legends are included with the permission of Badtjala man Glen Miller, whose uncle, Wilf Reeves, and mother, Olga Miller, wrote and illustrated the

important text: *The Legends of Moonie Jarl*. Olga Miller also wrote *Fraser Island Legends*, the source of the legend of the making of K'gari in *Paris Savages*.

Exegesis: The exegetical component of the dissertation contextualises the creative section by contributing an analysis of the historical representation of the "other" displayed in "human zoos" and in the scientific examinations and lectures that accompanied the performances. It includes a discussion of the postcolonial possibilities for re-historicising this period in global colonial history. I identify knowledge gaps in archival records, and discuss issues of voice and representation, including how the novel *Paris Savages* sits within contemporary theoretical and popular debates that other novels have generated on Aboriginal representation in fiction. The complexities surrounding writing on this issue as a non-Aboriginal person are discussed and potential ways forward posited.

N**ovel**: The creative component of the thesis, the novel *Paris Savages*, provides a practical treatment of the exegetical research, approaching similar questions through a different methodology: that of creative writing. The novel, while predominantly realist historical fiction, utilises elements of experimental writing, namely mixed genre writing and fictocriticism. Using as a springboard a montage of the existing non-fiction texts (including newspaper articles and scientific journal extracts) concerning the three Badtjala people transported to Europe in 1882-83, *Paris Savages* attempts to fictionally re-imagine the episode through two viewpoints, both of which interrogate the historical record.

The first viewpoint is that of the central protagonist, Hilda, an empathetic observer/witness and the fictional daughter of the German impresario, Louis Müller, who transported the Badtjala group to Europe. In Hilda's interactions with the Badtjala group, the reader, through dialogue, hears Bonny, Dorondera and Jurano directly answer back in a manner typically denied those relegated to the position of the "other" in the historical record. Indeed, from the perspective of the performers, the "other" is the audience looking on and the scientists conducting the examinations. Hilda and the novel's other characters also interact with and react to excerpts of historic texts, providing an opportunity to gradually re-historicise the record of "human zoos".

The second viewpoint is a necessarily and overtly imaginative and speculative voice – an omniscient, ghost narrator who, from her transformed, close to all-seeing perspective, begins to unmask the Eurocentric story of the performances and tell the story, as she now sees it, of Bonny's journey to Europe as it possibly was for him. While the ghost storyteller

can’t enter or know people’s thoughts, she has more access to private spaces and conversations than the living characters in the novel and, in so doing, invites the reader to imagine the perspective of Bonny, whose story she promised to tell. The section is introduced:

> And what of Bonny and his friends on this last night on Badtjala soil, once the fire had turned to coals and the dancing had stopped? If there was an observer there to report, a ghostly figure who could gaze secretly inside their huts, what story might they tell?
>
> Perhaps this.

EXEGESIS

Human zoos and their aftermath – an examination of the archive and the place for fiction

> The "human zoo" is exceptional in combining the functions of exhibition, performance, education and domination. (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: the Greatest" 1)

Introduction

When a child called Australian footballer Adam Goodes an "ape" at a match in Melbourne in May 2013, a "gutted" Goodes commented to the media that, "It's not her fault … Unfortunately it's what she hears, in the environment she's grown up in that has made her think it's ok to call people names" (Crawford).

It is indeed likely that the thirteen-year-old girl had little understanding of the origins of such prejudice – the naming of the "other" as something inferior; that she had no understanding of the vast pool of myth and misinformation that led her to make such a loaded remark. She was a member of a crowd – an audience – watching a man of skill perform, on his terms, when her racial slur was publicly voiced, then aired around the nation, and the world. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported that the girl later apologised, and Goodes, who was made Australian of the Year in 2014, has called for society to be educated about prejudice. He said it was not the first time he had been called an "ape" or a "monkey" (Crawford). Other Aboriginal footballers have also had such terms used against them, including Adelaide Crows player Eddie Betts, who the national media reported was called an "ape" on Facebook in 2017 and told to "go back to the zoo where they (he and his family) belong" (Puvanenthiran). The Betts incident came eight months after he had a banana thrown at him by a spectator at a game. So, from where in our history, and in the telling of our history, do such views arise?

As outlined in the general introduction to this dissertation, this exegesis discusses an aspect of colonial history that often epitomised the creation of the "lesser other": the display of indigenous people in ethnographic exhibitions, also known as "human zoos", in Europe and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Frequently accompanying the exhibitions were scientific examinations, which either took place as part of the spectacle or in closed meetings at anthropological museums where indigenous people were measured and studied with a focus on establishing theories of "race", and, in some cases, "racial

hierarchies". Blanchard et al. describe this period as a shift from "a form of racism which was exclusively scientific in nature to a popular racism, which spread rapidly" ("From Scientific" 104). Postcolonial theory is highly relevant to the study of "human zoos" in its attempts to "rethink the history and agency of people subordinated under various forms of imperialism" ("Postcolonialism"). From Fanon's powerful texts *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), which outline the constructed psychological relationship between coloniser and colonised, to Said's *Orientalism* and its exposé of the West's proclivity for "othering" as a means of domination, and more recently the work of Gayatri Spivak, who, as Purtschert elegantly summarises, argues that "whiteness relies on the racialised Other who stands in for the premodern ways of life as well as the basic and primitive aspects of human existence" (508), "human zoos" are relevant. They are at the heart of colonial attempts to construct the non-Western "other".

The focus of the exegesis is the display, in Europe and America, of Australian Aboriginal people in the 1880s and 1890s, the peak of "human zoos" as mass entertainment. The exegesis draws on existing and original research, buttressed by elements of postcolonial theory, to ask the following questions:

- Chapter 1 – What is known about the evolution of ethnographic exhibitions in Europe and America to their height in the 1880s and 1890s; what form does this knowledge take; and what are the gaps in the historical record?
- Chapter 2 – How were performers represented and misrepresented, and by whom?
- Chapter 3 – What role might fiction play in highlighting and addressing misrepresentations, knowledge gaps, and the positioning of the performers in the story as "other"? This chapter is largely approached in the first-person, as it includes a discussion of my attempts to address the challenge in practice in the creative component of the thesis, the novel *Paris Savages*.

A note on terminology

The term "indigenous" is used here to describe people indigenous to the lands from which they travelled to show-venues in Europe or America.

The display of indigenous people in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries at travelling performances, whether in zoological gardens, music halls or American "freak shows", or in colonial and other mass exhibitions, is collectively referred to in this

dissertation as being part of the phenomena of the "human zoo". This somewhat contested term was used by the editors of *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires*, and in the 2012 exhibition *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage* at Paris's *Musée du Quai Branly* (Thuram), itself a contested space (Price). However, De L'Etoile questions whether the term, as a single concept, accurately represents the spectrum of shows: from the most racist to those that were more respectful cultural reconstructions (qtd. in Blanchard "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 23). Similarly, Sánchez-Gómez takes issue with the term "human zoos" because it groups the various ethnic shows into one category and assumes and represents all performers as "passive victims of racism and capitalism in the West" (22). In Sánchez-Gómez's view, the term does not consider "the role that these individuals (the performers) may have played, the extent to which their participation in the show was voluntary and the interests which may have moved some of them to take part in these shows" (22), nor the possibility that in some cases the shows provided "opportunity contexts" (22) for the performers. He points to the value of investigating performer voices, as difficult as he acknowledges that to be.

For Sánchez-Gómez, "human zoos" can be divided into three categories: commercial ethnographic exhibitions, colonial exhibitions, and missionary exhibitions. He argues that while the shows themselves were often similar, the three categories served certain goals, from financial to subjugating and civilising, to Christianising (19-20). While such goals might not always have been independent of one another, they provide a useful general summary of the driving forces behind the burgeoning phenomena of ethnographic exhibition in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Sánchez-Gómez acknowledges that the different characteristics of the exhibited peoples formed the basis of their exhibition and may have fostered the public's racist reactions, but notes that there were other factors at work that were more complimentary: examples which "could be seen as encouraging the admiration of the displays of bodies, gestures, skills, creations and knowledge which were seen as both exotic and seductive" (21). Nevertheless, Sánchez-Gómez concedes that he "does not intend to soften or justify the phenomenon of the ethnic show" (22) where:

> Even in the least dramatic and exploitative cases it is evident that the essence of these shows was a marked inequality, in which every supposed "context of interaction" established a dichotomous relationship between black and white, North and South, colonisers and colonised, and ultimately, between dominators and dominated. (22)

As Blanchard et al. summarise in defence of the term, "to place a man, with the intention that he should be seen, in a specific reconstructed space, not because of what he 'does' (an artisan, for example), but for what he 'is' (seen through the prism of a real or imagined difference) is in our view the most precise definition of the human zoos" (qtd. in Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 23).

Rydell points to the importance of discovering the "ideological implications" of human exhibition (qtd. in Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 23). In my analysis of the exhibition of Australian Aboriginal people, although some displayed skills were lauded – spear and boomerang throwing, for example – representations were frequently of a "primitive", a "lesser other". In this context, and for the purpose of this dissertation, I therefore consider the term "human zoo" apt. It is used here interchangeably with the descriptions "ethnographic exhibition" and "people show".

CHAPTER 1

"Human Zoos" – an examination of the archive

Fig. 1. Coney Island, 1905. A group of exhibited "Igorrotes" people. (Source: Library of Congress)

The evolution of "human zoos"

Before attempting to propose a means of re-historicising the story of "human zoos" with respect to the display in Europe of three Badtjala people, it is necessary to survey the archive as it relates to human exhibition, its origins and humanity's apparent fascination with "otherness". Postcolonial theoretician Edward Said's groundbreaking concept of "Orientalism", which describes the construction of "otherness", is nowhere better exemplified than in the case of the "human zoo". The concept is captured starkly in the images of "Igorrotes" people of the northern Philippines shown in 1905 on New York's Coney Island (see Fig. 1), the "undisputed capital" of America sites of entertainment at the time (Poignant 226). Said variously identifies "Orientalism" as:

- "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Said 2)
- "a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (5)

- "not an airy European fantasy about the Orient but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment" (6)
- "the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures" (7)
- "the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had a different view on the matter" (7)

While "human zoos" became mass entertainment toward the end of the nineteenth century, Blanchard et al. note that "the other" has been exhibited since Egyptian times when black "dwarves" from the Sudan were displayed; and in the Roman empire, conquered "barbarians" and "savages" were paraded through Roman streets to reinforce the hegemony and superiority of the ruling State ("Human Zoos: The Greatest" 4). Later, travellers and explorers, including Columbus, returned with human "specimens", dead and alive, for show in the courts of European Monarchs; in 1550, the King of France was shown Tupi Indians from Brazil, while in 1580, "savages" collected by the Duke of Bavaria were shown alongside "dwarves" and "cripples" (4). Of course, New World visitors were arriving in far-away lands not just as trophies for display, but in a wide range of capacities. In Britain, this was occurring from at least the sixteenth century, but whether, as Fullagar notes, they came as fishermen or diplomats, or as "trophies, slaves, interpreters and sailors" they were "always received under the general category of 'savage'" (*Savage Visit* 2).

From the courts of Europe with their chambers of marvels, evolved the cabinets of curiosities of the seventeenth and eighteenth century where all nature of rare and strange objects were displayed. Such collections marked the beginning of "systems of classification and hierarchies … the precursors of the museum" (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 2). According to Fullagar, the first "properly popular visit" in Britain took place in 1710 with the arrival of a group of Iroquois who made the journey to call for assistance against French encroachment of their lands; they drew attention from all levels of society as the "supposedly pristine embodiment of savagery" (Fullager, "Bennelong" 37). In 1730, when seven Cherokee arrived in London to broker a trade deal, they were similarly the focus of great attention (37). Likewise, with subsequent groups of Native American peoples visiting

Britain: a group of Cherokee arriving in 1762 attracted crowds of 10,000 or more (37). This was the era of the "noble savage", which declared itself most notably with the appearance of individuals such as the Pacific Islander, Mai, who thrilled audiences, even impressing the king, when he arrived in Britain in 1774 (Fullagar, *Savage Visit* 1). Interestingly, Australian Aboriginal man Bennelong and his teenage companion Yemmerawanne, who visited England in 1793, attracted media coverage only upon their arrival; then, for reasons that have been theorised about but are unclear, they fell from the public gaze (Fullager, "Bennalong" 31). Yemmerawanne died in England and despite much talk of Bennalong meeting the Queen, he appears never to have done so (31). Meanwhile, on the continent, with the changes brought about by the French Revolution, displays once confined to the aristocracy were brought into public gardens and the collections of plants, animals and people made available to scientists focused on the organisation of life (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest," 2). In 1810, Saartjie Baartman, advertised as the Hottentot Venus, was taken from South Africa to London and Paris for exhibition and scientific study, and, in one of the most disturbing examples of human exhibition, shown as a spectacle through the remainder of her life and after her death and dissection (6).

Qureshi writes of some exhibitions reenacting what were considered to be "civilising stages", including, in 1845, San children performing three stages of "civilisation": the first demonstrating the use of a spear, the second the same boy appearing in military uniform, and finally as a gentleman's servant (122). Indeed, she argues that displayed peoples were often sent as "agents of civilisation" (128), not necessarily unwillingly. As the nineteenth century progressed, performers increasingly worked under contracts. Qureshi provides an example of this from as early as 1844 when the chief of the Bakhoje, Mewhushekaw (White Cloud), agreed to an arrangement with the US government and missionary George Melody to travel to Europe with thirteen other Bakhoje to perform (131). In London the group met at the Egyptian Hall with the exhibitor Catlin, who was known to them from his time in North America. Qureshi writes that, 'The group … sat with Catlin in the middle of the gallery under a Crow tipi, smoking pipes and discussing the proposed exhibition in a Bakhoje council" (132). Such insights provide fascinating clues about performer involvement, agency and alternative histories, which will be examined further in chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation.

Notable events in the development of "human zoos" as a larger scale phenomena in the West include the founding of the American Museum by P.T. Barnum, which received extensive press coverage for featuring "curiosities" and was by 1851 the most popular institution of its type in America (Harris 33, 46); the 1851 Great Exhibition of London, the

first of its kind, where the audience was amazed by the artistry of the Middle and Far East (Blanchard, et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 6); the 1859 grand European tour of Zulus, of which Dickens famously wrote, arguing against the "myth of the 'good savage'" (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest," 6); Carl Hagenbeck's ethnographic exhibitions in Germany, shows that were toured throughout Europe; and Barnum's 1884 Congress of Nations, featuring, among other attractions, "Cunningham's Australian Aborigines" as outlined in Poignant's *Professional Savages*.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, three forces culminated to ensure the success of "human zoos", which were by then attracting millions of paying audience goers: the exhibition of constructed otherness, the scientific theorisation about "racial hierarchies", and the rapidly developing colonial empire (Blanchard et al., "From Scientific" 104-5). Great powers showed their links with their colonies (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 9) through displaying performances by colonial subjects. Qureshi notes that trade and slavery routes were successfully exploited by showmen (108), enabling hundreds of people to be displaced from their homelands to live in "native villages" (4) where they were viewed by audiences. By the late nineteenth century, gone were the days of the celebrated "noble savage". With colonialism in Australia, the Americas, Africa, India and throughout the Pacific at its peak, human exhibitions were frequently characterised by the portrayal of indigenous people as "inferior", often based on skin colour: "the blacker the individual … the more limited or non-existent his or her capacity for development was judged to be" (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 29). Here, Desmond Morris's description of "in-groups" and "out-groups" is significant in the mounting of what he calls "group prejudice", in particular, the damaging generalisations that are linked to distinguishing features such as skin colour (133).

The scientific examinations of touring performers by esteemed anatomists, such as Germany's Rudolf Virchow, mostly reinforced ideas of racial "inferiority" and "superiority", ideas that have since been debunked (Gould, *The Mismeasure*). Certain scientists further subscribed to even more contentious ideas of "racial hierarchy", ranking "races" from "savage" to "civilised". One such scientist was the German Ernst Haeckel, who extended Darwin's idea of natural selection to "what it implied about the development of races and cultures" (Rothfels 111). The (false) idea that some forms of human were closer to apes than others, led to an insistence on detailed anatomical measurements of groups such as Australian Aboriginal people, with a focus on describing features such as thumbs and toes. The German anatomist Carl Stratz noted "the various more primitive human races were examined for their

resemblance to apes; … a list of ... ape-like characteristics of man was compiled, and the missing link – the last connecting link between human and ape – was sought after with enthusiasm" (qtd. in Rothfels 111). Indeed, the idea of "missing links" infiltrated the people shows, with impresarios seizing on such concepts and staging them, as in the case of "the Ape Woman Krao" who was born in Laos in 1872 with the hair disorder hypertrichosis and shown until 1926 (ACHAC, "The Spectacle"; Poignant 124). "Racial hierarchies" have since been discredited by scientists such as Stephen Jay Gould in his famous title *The Mismeasure of Man* in which he writes of the fallacy of ranking and "our propensity for ordering complex variation as a gradual ascending scale. Metaphors of progress and gradualism have been among the most pervasive in Western thought" (56).

While outside the scope of this dissertation, ethnographic exhibitions also took place in Asia, the Kyoto exhibition 1895 being a notable example (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 9). Blanchard et al. write that the exhibition established "a Japanese racial model (in which the Japanese were essentially superior), in contrast to the 'backward peoples' from surrounding countries … those peoples who were 'potentially' colonizable by the new elite groups in power were put on display ... (Koreans, Taiwanese, Okinawans and Chinese)" (9). Interestingly, however, Japanese pavilions were featured in the Chicago exhibition the previous year (9), indicating that the shows were not places where only colonial subjects were displayed. Indeed, the colonial outposts themselves were not immune, with ethnographic exhibitions also occurring in Australia, India and Indochina. It should be noted that, in Western Europe, alongside the "human zoos", which constructed and reinforced ideas of the "exotic" often based on racial differences, were displays of "regional heritage" (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 21). These regional displays included Breton, Alpine, Irish, Alsatian, Scottish and Corsican villages. However, Blanchard et al. draw distinctions between such shows, which promoted, among other things, "regional heritage" rather than "racial alterity" (21). Such shows fall outside the category of "human zoos" described in this dissertation.

Mass European spectacles and showmen of the late nineteenth century

The man credited with bringing large-scale people shows to Europe was Carl Hagenbeck, a wild animal trader for zoos throughout Europe and, in America, for P.T. Barnum, whom Hagenbeck described in his autobiography *Beasts and Men* as his "faithful friend" (26). Of the 400 people shows in Germany between 1875 and 1930, Dreesbach found that at least 100 were organised by Hagenbeck (qtd. in Dreesbach). According to a newspaper report in the

Illustrirte Zeitung on September 1882, the Badtjala group who are the focus of this dissertation toured Europe under Hagenbeck's guidance ("Die Australneger" 238), although there is no record of the group in the Hagenbeck archives (Gille). Whether or not the group travelled officially under Hagenbeck's direction, it is likely they had involvement with the showman given the central role he played in "people shows" in Germany and throughout Europe.

Hagenbeck had his own exhibition ground, the Hagenbeck Thierpark, in Hamburg and wrote that "in 1879, the animal trade itself was in an exceedingly bad way, so that the anthropological side of my business became more and more important" (25). He staged numerous human exhibitions from 1874, initially showing "Laplanders" (Sami people indigenous to the northern Arctic) of whom he wrote:

> Our guests, it is true, would not have shone in a beauty show, but they were so wholly unsophisticated and so totally unspoiled by civilisation that they seemed like beings from another world. I felt sure that the little strangers would arouse great interest in Germany. (16)

Hagenbeck claimed in his autobiography that the show was a great success and that, "All Hamburg came to see this genuine 'Lapland in miniature'" (19). He then showed people from the Sudan along with animals from their homeland, and toured "Nubians" in Paris, London and Berlin (Blanchard et al., "From Scientific" 105). He exhibited a group of "Eskimos" at his Hamburg Thierpark in 1877, and toured them to Paris, Dresden and Berlin, where they attracted the attention of the German Emperor, before they "returned to their native land, greatly enriched by their travels" (Hagenbeck 25). Hagenbeck's displays for many scholars represented the "paradigmatic example of a human zoo" (Sánchez-Gómez 4) with his commercial success being the result of his innovation of showing "exotic" people alongside animals from their countries of origin, in settings that recreated their homelands (4). Hagenbeck recorded that the "Nubian" (Sudanese) exhibition that toured Europe in 1877-78 attracted sixty-two thousand spectators in Berlin on a single day (qtd. in Rothfels 84), and the productions would continue to grow over the coming years. According to Baglo, it is a little-known fact that both Hagenbeck and William Cody (Buffalo Bill) signed contracts with the performers in their shows from the outset (148), indicating some degree of agency of performers. However, while Hagenbeck considered himself a philanthropist, it should be noted that the men he employed as tour managers did not always treat performers humanely,

as evidenced by the manager Herr Terne who Poignant notes treated the Fuegians he toured in 1881-1882 very poorly, dispatching them on "a freight-wagon on a twenty-seven hour journey to Berlin, with sixty kilograms of half-rare beef" (139). According to Gabi Eissenberger, the group died and were dissected in Zurich (qtd. in Poignant 139).

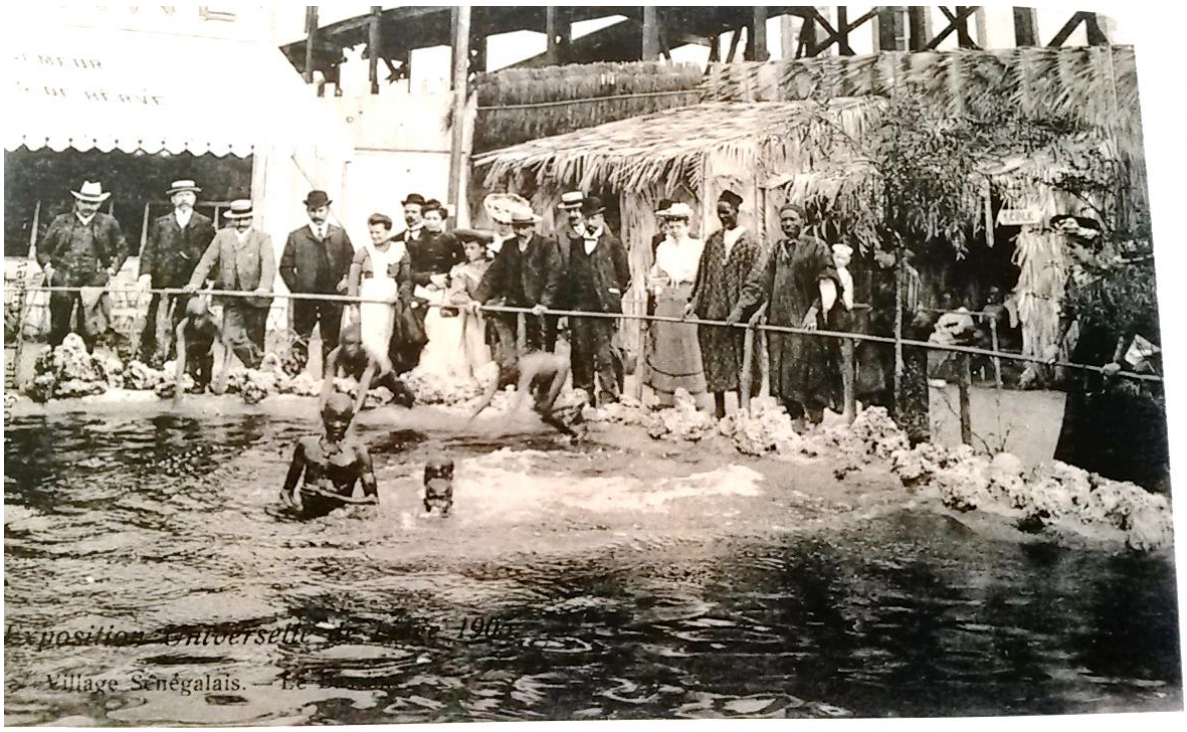

Fig. 2. The pool in the Senegal village, *Exposition Universelle de Liege* postcard 1905.
(Source: Blanchard et al. *Human Zoos: the Invention of the Savage* (catalogue), 185)

Perhaps inspired by the German showman's ventures, the director of Paris's Zoological Gardens (*Jardin d'Acclimatation*), Geoffrey Saint-Hilaire, staged two ethnographic exhibitions featuring "Nubians" and "Eskimos" the same year as Hagenbeck's "Nubian" exhibition, attracting a million visitors (Blanchard et al., "From Scientific" 105). Indeed, Baglo writes that Hagenbeck exported "a series of shows from Hamburg to the *Jardin d'Acclimatation* in Paris between 1877 and 1887" ("Rethinking" 141). Sánchez-Gómez describes Hilaire's shows as "less dramatic" but "more racially stigmatizing than Hagenbeck's shows" (5), and "a highly lucrative business camouflaged beneath a halo of anthropological scientifism" (5). For the thirty-five years after its first people show in 1877-78, Blanchard et al. calculated that Paris's *Jardin d'Acclimatation* staged approximately 30 ethnographic exhibitions, making it the main site for such exhibitions in France ("From Scientific" 105). Other venues followed suit, including the Parisian Universal Exhibitions of

1879 and 1889, in which a "negro village" with 400 "native" performers was on show, and 1900, when a diorama of Madagascar attracted 50 million visitors (Blanchard et al., "From Scientific" 105). In France, according to Sánchez-Gómez, "from the 1870s and 1880s, in particular, shows can be described as moving away from notions of fantasy, adventure and exoticism and towards the most brutal forms of exploitation" (5).

In Belgium in 1897, King Leopold II imported to his palace in Tervuren 267 Congolese, seven of whom died during their stay (Boffey). The Congolese "village" was seen by more than a quarter of the Belgian population (Boffey), while in 1905 a "Senegal village", complete with pool, was built for the *Exposition Universelle de Liege* (see Fig. 2). In Great Britain, meanwhile, Qureshi's research points to many performers working under contract by the late nineteenth century (136; Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 14), as they were in Hagenbeck's shows (Thode-Arora, "Hagenbeck's" 169; Baglo). Although contracts may indicate some degree of concern for individual performers, Qureshi acknowledges a wider purpose: the crucial role ethnologists and anthropologists played in Britain in enabling and authenticating the shows and legitimising them as places of science and education while advancing the colonial enterprise (qtd. in Sánchez-Gómez 6).

Hagenbeck, too, made use of anthropologists to authenticate his performers with the anatomist Rudolf Virchow famously examining most of the groups who visited Germany (Poignant 118), including the three Badtjala people from Fraser Island (117). From Virchow's own accounts it appears such investigations were sometimes received fearfully by performers (qtd. in Rivet 108). Thode-Arora notes that the overall experience of performers in Europe depended very much on the "character of the tour impresario" ("Hagenbeck's" 173), which she described as commonly "paternalistic" (173), with some performers wanting to "take part in further Hagenbeck shows, once their contracts had ended, while others seem to have returned home to face a frosty reception and to have sunk into a depression" (173). According to Baglo, the Sami performers promoted as "Laplanders" by Hagenbeck and others demanded good conditions, negotiated through contracts, in their European (and American) shows, even going on strike if conditions were not met ("Rethinking" 148-9). The issue of agency will be examined further in chapter 2.

Shows were also held in Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Japan and beyond. The last "human zoo" to close featured a group of people from the Congo who, in a repeat of King Leopold 11's Congolese village, were exhibited as part of the 1958 Brussels World's Fair (Schofield; Boffey). The 1958 exhibition, Sánchez Gómez argues, was "organised around a discourse which defended the moral values of interracial fraternity and which set out

to convince both Belgian society and the Congolese that Belgians were only in Congo to civilise, and not to exploit" (16).

There was, therefore, a spectrum of human exhibition in Europe in the late nineteenth century, from shows where performers negotiated contracts and insisted on good living conditions (Baglo, "Rethinking" 148), to others that were more exploitative. In terms of racial stereotyping and representation (further explored in chapter 2), Baglo notes in her PhD thesis, *Agents Abroad: Living Exhibitions of Sami in Europe and America*, that ideas of racial typography and evolution were most evident in the universal exhibitions of France and America (qtd. in Baglo, "Rethinking" 143).

The American shows of the late nineteenth century

In America, meanwhile, a tradition of travelling circuses morphed into worldwide tours of the "most 'savage' and 'outlandish' beings, hybrids of the human and the animal" (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 3), setting up a contrast between "modern" America and "Indian savagery" (3).

In 1882, the American showman P.T. Barnum sent a letter to agents and consulate staff worldwide, appealing for "specimens of these uncivilized peoples" to add to his other attractions (qtd. in Poignant 58):

> My aim is to exhibit to the American public, not only human beings of different races, but also where practicable, those who possess extraordinary peculiarities such as giants, dwarfs, singular disfigurements of the person, dexterity in the use of weapons, dancing, singing, juggling, unusual feats of strength or agility etc. (58)

Barnum's Greatest Show on Earth held in 1884 featured, among other attractions, a group of Aboriginal people from Palm and Hinchenbrook Islands who, along with another "troupe" from the same area, feature in Poignant's ground-breaking 2004 book, *Professional Savages*. Poignant's book compiles archival material on the troupes' tours in America, under Barnum, and in Europe and sheds light on how the performers, despite ill treatment and negative racial stereotyping, performed as professionals with moments of proud resistance.

Like Barnum's spectacles, Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows, which toured America and Europe from 1884, also provided more theatre than reality with their "reenactments of Buffalo hunts and attacks on stagecoaches by savage Indians", according to Rothfels (90). Managers of the shows, however, claimed they were of educative value (Maddra 134). As

with many of the groups shown, including Australian Aboriginal people, the Wild West shows were promoted as being one of the last chances to see "a way of life that was vanishing" and a "race in decline" (135).

Indigenous people were also shown at World Fairs, which in America attracted audiences of almost one hundred million people between 1876 and 1916 (qtd. in Rydell 2). Rydell notes that at such fairs "the idea of technological and national progress became laced with scientific racism," and that, "World's fairs provide a partial but crucial explanation for the interpretation and popularization of evolutionary ideas about race and progress" (5). He quotes the American ethnologist Charles Rau: "the extreme lowness of our remote ancestors cannot be a source of humiliation; on the contrary, we should glory in our having advanced so far above them, and recognize the great truth that progress is the law that governs the development of mankind' (24). In summary, as Rydell argues, the fairs of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries enabled "the mass transmission for theories of scientific racism to the general public" (Egan 16). A growing appreciation of the large scale of such endeavours and their importance to developing a public understanding of "race" highlights the need to find novel ways of retelling this history that expose past silences and contribute to a revision of constructed stereotypes.

Conclusion

At their best, the mass human exhibitions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries might be interpreted as having evolved from a worldwide and longstanding fascination with the "curious" and the "foreign". They may even have, in cases such as the Sami, been used by performers for their own ends (Baglo, "Rethinking" 138). At their worst, "human zoos" evolved out of a wish for the West to create and dominate the "other", and to better see themselves, epitomising the colonial act of power through representation as theorised by postcolonial scholars such as Said (*Orientalism*) and, more recently, Gayatri Spivak. However, Spivak "reverses the emphasis in early Said (and early Bhabha as well) on colonial discourse as the principal object of attention" (Moore-Gilbert 75), instead focusing on "various manifestations of counter-discourse" (75). Spivak's emphasis on the subaltern's voice in answering back is highly relevant to attempts to use creative means to address past silences and challenge, even to de-colonise, the historical record.

It is notable that large-scale ethnographic exhibitions emerged almost simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic, with a (generally) consistent message concerning "exotic"

peoples (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 3-4) – a message propagated in advertising materials, in the media and in scientific publications of the day. In the shows, the colonised performer was often represented as "inferior" and, sometimes as "savage", in the case of performers such as Australian Aboriginal people and Tierra del Fuegians – both of whom, along with poor "peasants", Kant described as "raw human" (qtd. in Purtschert 510). The French philosopher Michael Foucault argues of the Imperial project in general: "the constitutive relation between power and knowledge provided a critical angle from which to investigate the ways representations of non-European culture and thought were shaped by a web of institutional and political forces connected to the justification and practice of Western imperialism" ("Postcolonialsm"). In the absence of a significant volume of performer viewpoints, to be elaborated upon in the next chapter, the knowledge base concerning "human zoos" has been historically Eurocentric and therefore deeply problematic in terms of its relationship with power. "Counter-discourses", as Spivak described them (75), are largely missing. However, there exists a body of research (Thode-Arora, "Hagenbeck's"; Baglo) that has revealed that not all representations or experiences of performers were negative, and not all performers were unwilling victims. In addition, there are hints in the historical record of performers' resistance to being controlled (Poignant 131, 136), opening the way for the consideration of alternative histories that reject simplistic representations of performers as passive victims without agency. This is not to suggest that, for the most part, portrayals and performer experiences were positive, merely that to consider "human zoos" as a purely binary phenomenon between essentially "civilised/powerful" and "other/oppressed" perpetuates the restrictive categories and power imbalances evident in colonialism. Such binaries need to be disrupted if stereotypes are to be undone, otherwise, as Fanon wrote in *Black Skin, White Masks*: "The white man is locked in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness" (xiii-xiv).

CHAPTER 2

How were performers represented, and in whose voice?

'Popular' representations

Dickens, after viewing groups such as "Mr Catlin's Ojibbeway Indians", the "Earthmen Bushmen" and "the party of Zulu Kaffir's at the St George's Gallery, Hyde Park Corner" wrote in his essay, *The Noble Savage*:

> I beg to say that I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage. I consider him a prodigious nuisance, and an enormous superstition. His calling rum fire-water, and me a pale face, wholly fail to reconcile me to him. I don't care what he calls me. I call him a savage, and I call a savage a something highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth … It is all one to me, whether he sticks a fishbone through his visage, or bits of trees through the lobes of his ears, or birds' feathers in his head … he is a savage— cruel, false, thievish, murderous; addicted more or less to grease, entrails, and beastly customs; a wild animal with the questionable gift of boasting; a conceited, tiresome, bloodthirsty, monotonous humbug. (337)

Published in 1853, Dickens' essay not only reveals the little regard he held for the visitors to his country, but reinforces a complete disinterest in knowing the performers' points of view. In the vast majority of cases, the story of the indigenous performers in ethnographic exhibitions was told in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through the accounts of Europeans, through advertising materials of showmen and exhibitors, the doctors and scientists who examined the visitors during their stay, journalists' newspaper reports, and the writers of the day (Poignant 118; Thode-Arora, "Hagenbeck's" 173). Poignant quotes the work of Eissenberger who, while compiling reports on South American shows, found that, apart from criticism of the deaths of a group of Fuegians in Zurich, only one report condemned Völkerschauen (qtd. in Poignant 118). The anonymous author wrote in the *Magdeburger Zeitung* in October 1880 that they wondered what the visiting performers thought of their "highly educated European brothers", and concluded that "exhibiting humans is shameful, especially in zoos" (qtd. in Poignant 118). Hilke Thode-Arora, in her review of sixty years of the papers from Hamburg from 1874, failed to find any condemnation of the shows in that city (qtd. in Poignant 118). Further, accounts in the performers' own voices are extremely rare (8), making it difficult to ascertain their true experience and willingness or

otherwise to be involved in the displays. Egan writes of a group of Bolivians and Pottawatomie performers recruited for the Chicago Fair of 1893, "these incomplete stories, reveal the practices of erasure during the construction and exhibition of this 'other'" (18). It was therefore not simply the showing of the "other" that shaped societal views of race, but the way the "other" was represented by the showmen, reporters and scientists of the day in the absence of alternative views.

The case of Aboriginal people from Queensland's Palm and Hinchenbrook Islands participating in Barnum's circus and dime shows, travelling "freakshows" where audiences paid a dime to enter, epitomises the construction of the "lesser other". Ahead of Barnum's Greatest Show on Earth, only Jumbo the elephant received more column inches than the Aborigines from Australia, according to Poignant (91). Poignant notes that in advertising materials the group were billed as "the Australian cannibals … not only the first, but the last, of their race" (76). In Barnum's own publicity and in the newspaper columns that followed, it was said that the Aborigines "gorge themselves on each other's flesh" and were "undersized and distorted in form" (qtd. in Poignant 91). Their narrow calves were given as evidence in the *St Louis Daily Globe-Democrat* on June 1, 1883, of having "never done anything more than was necessary for mere subsistence in a torrid climate" (qtd. in Poignant 92), a description Poignant suggests infers that they were not as highly evolved as the rest of humanity (92). While few performers were taken by force from their homelands (Sánchez-Gómez 6), there is evidence the Aboriginal troupe procured in 1883 by Cunningham for Barnum attempted to flee and was recaptured (Poignant 69-70). Indeed, this story of capture of "savages" was used by Cunningham to arouse curiosity and build audiences. Qureshi writes that Cunningham even included in his promotional pamphlet articles from the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which reported that the "'poor creatures were evidently in terror and want to run away from their employer,' and that the government's representatives were 'anxious that these men should not [be] taken away from the Colony' but 'sent back [to] the district from which they were taken'" (qtd. in Qureshi 110). Cunningham toured the group in America, describing them as "cannibals" and "bestial" (see Fig. 3). He showed them again as "cannibals" in London in 1884 (see Fig. 4), further describing the performers in his promotional pamphlet as being the "lowest type of humanity … in every particular in which the Negro and Hottentot falls below the white race, the Australian falls still lower than the black African" (qtd. in Qureshi 110). In the words of Kroeber, "showmen are part of the human condition. The distance their message reaches and the tools of its transmittal change with time and place, but not their business which has always been to inform, to exaggerate, to

advertise, to tell the world what the world wants to hear" (129). Such depictions promulgated the constructed stereotypes by the West of the "other" and notions of racial hierarchy, blatantly depicted in advertising materials as recently as the 1931 Colonial Exhibition in Paris (see Fig. 5).

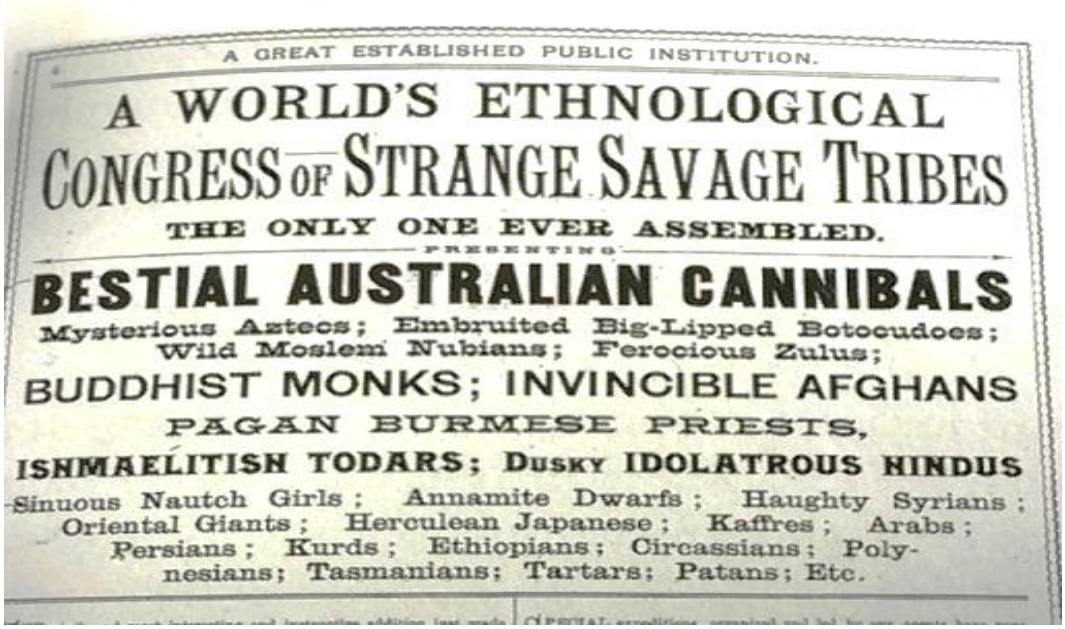

Fig. 3. *Advance Courier* advertising to American audiences "Barnum's World's Ethnographical Congress of Strange Savage Tribes", 1884. (Source: Poignant 109)

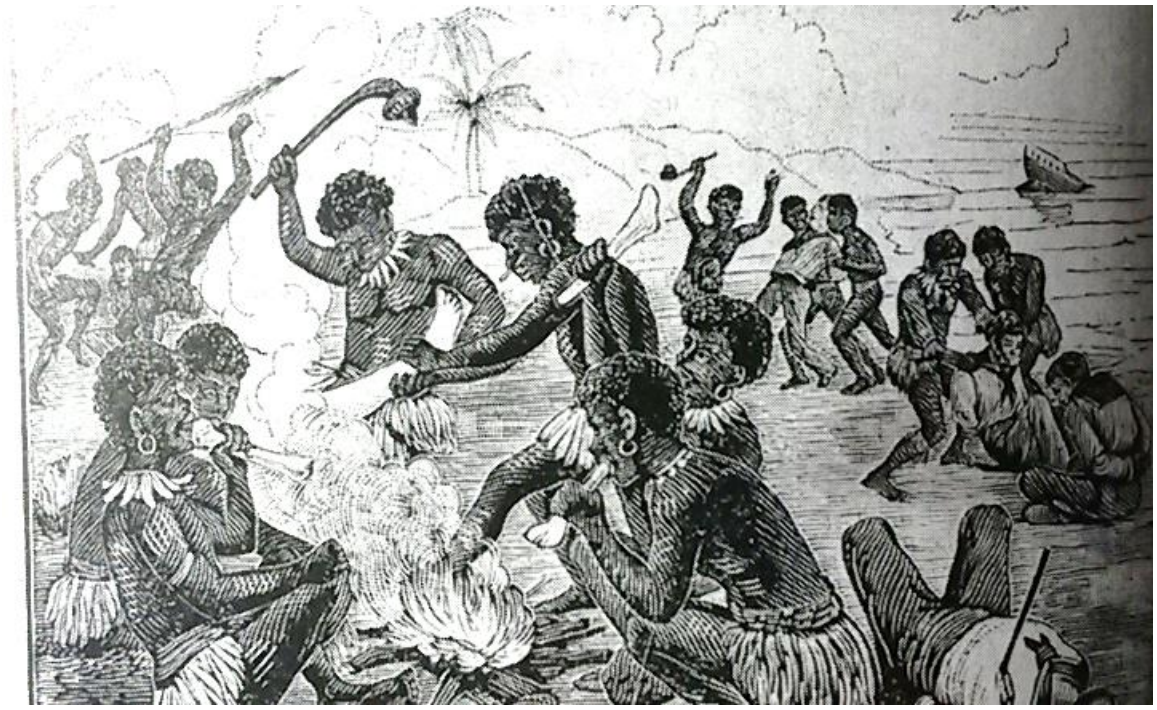

Fig. 4. Pamphlet (English edition) advertising "R.A. Cunningham's Australian Aborigines: Tattooed Cannibal Black Trackers and Boomerang Throwers", 1884. (Source: Poignant 28)

Fig. 5. Poster advertising *l'Exposition Coloniale Internationale*, Paris, 1931. "*Faria, 'L'homme des bois'"*, 1931, Paris. (Source: Blanchard, *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage*, 63)

The depictions of performers in "human zoos" commonly fed off travel literature, which was critical in creating hierarchical views of foreign peoples, aligning displayed people with missionary, government and explorer accounts (Qureshi 96-7). Journalists reviewing the shows of the mid and late nineteenth century then, in turn, used the shows' pamphlets as their primary source of descriptive information on displayed peoples. A review of Farini's show of Zulus, for example, recycled material from Caldecott's 1853 exhibition, while Dickens' accounts of Zulus were also largely drawn from a promotional pamphlet (Qureshi 93). Barnum's descriptions of Cunningham's Aboriginal troupes likewise drew on the self-confessed "manhunter's" own stories of capture (Poignant 89). Representational stereotypes set in place by travel literature were thereby further constructed and, through repetition, maintained in a "recursive cycle of stereotypes" (Dreesbach).

In a noteworthy extension, the description of savages was also used by the likes of London journalist Henry Mayhew, who employed the term "savages" and "wanderers" to describe his own city's urban poor: "London was teeming with urban savages" (Qureshi 16-17). Terms used to subjugate people according to race were thus transferred to representations of class, another kind of "other" distinct from the ruling elite, in whose hands rested the power to disseminate written "knowledge". It is notable that "slumming" tours of London's East End were occurring concurrently with "human zoos". Nils Roemer writes optimistically, if not rather idealistically, of the East End slum tours, that they operated as "a cultural practice in a metropolitan city that brought cultures into contact and negotiated their boundaries, generating an engagement with and a rethinking of difference and modernity" (416). It seems doubtful that the displayed poor regarded their role in such academic terms, nor that the outcomes in terms of representation and power were benign.

In addition to the representational opposites of "savage" and "civilised", other stereotypes were similarly useful to the colonial project. Throughout her book *People on Parade* Qureshi describes representations of the "other" as "deviant" in contrast to the "normal" behaviour of "civilised" audiences, driven by "instinct" rather than "reason", "madness" rather than "sanity", on the "periphery" rather than at the "centre", engaged in "cohabitation" versus "marriage", "ranting" to conceal their secret designs rather than using "speech", and "wandering" rather than being "settled", to use Mayhew's terms (18-22). Such contrasting representations of "colonisable subjects" were perhaps most evident in the posters that advertised the shows. Aztecs, for example, were shown as so diminutive they could fit in their manager's hand in promotional materials (Qureshi 62), and the case was similar with Farini's "Pigmies or Dwarf Earth-men", whom the showman was pictured towering over in advertising materials (61).

Audiences, meanwhile, began to expect the clichés advertised, reinforcing the popular representations. For example, audiences' notion of North American Indians was typically Sioux Indians in elaborate headdresses; therefore, shows of North American Indians were frequently presented as Sioux, regardless of the performers' true identities (120). Similarly, Sami/"Laplander" performances were somewhat contrived to include displays that met audience expectations of the indigenous people of the northern Arctic; however, Baglo argues that "they were not fake simulations. Instead, they were cultural enactments, self-representations in new situations" ("Rethinking" 148).

Although "racial" portrayals were often stereotypical, they were not always unadmiring, nor consistent. Depictions of members of the same "race" and sometimes even of the same group varied between showspaces, nations, and which showman was in charge. In a Dresden newspaper report on the three Badtjala people touring Germany in 1882-3, the focus was on the skill of the Aboriginal performers in casting boomerangs and spears ("Die Australneger" 238), and even the group shown as "cannibals" by Cunningham in America were regarded more with wonder than fear when they visited the beer garden of Castan's Panoptikum in Berlin. A cartoon (Fig. 6) published in *Über Land und Meer* in 1884 highlighted the close contact between performers and locals, and the taking of a lock of hair from one of the Aboriginal men by a German woman enjoying what Poignant described as the "seduction of the spectacle" (130).

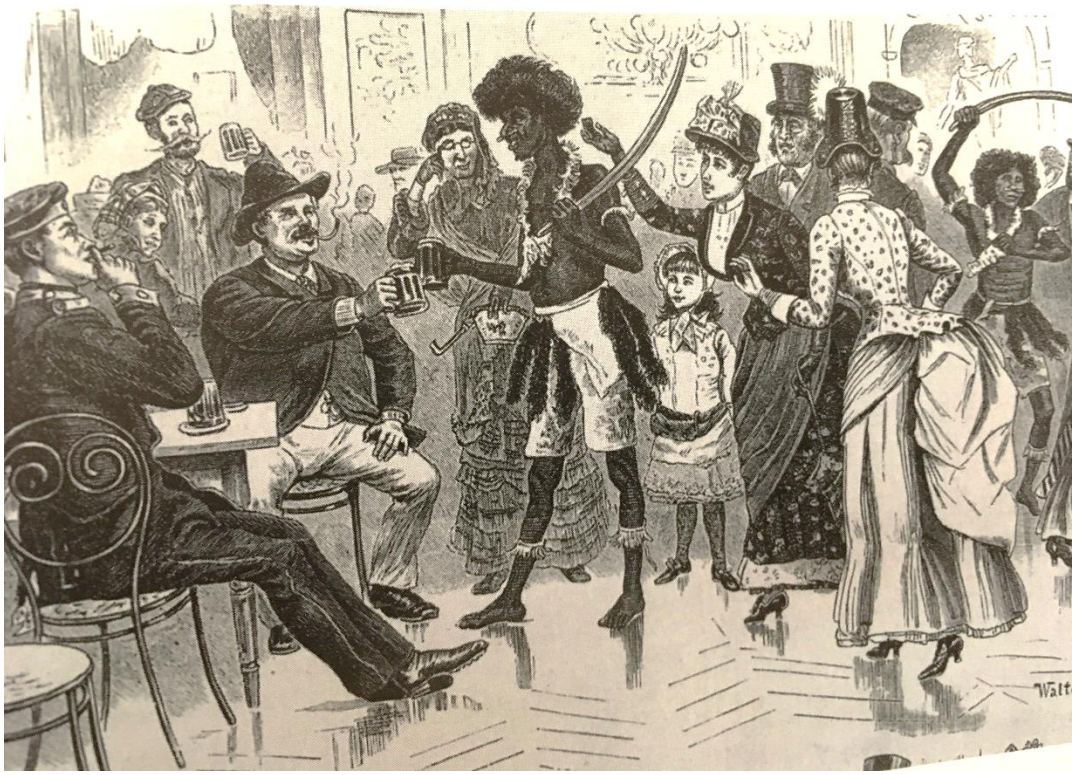

Fig. 6. "*Bei den Australnegern*" by Walter Busch, *Über Land und Meer*, *Allgemeine Illustrirte Zeitung*, 1885. (Source: Poignant 131).

Thode-Arora, whose research focus is the German showspaces, notes that, "The reactions of the spectators manifest an overwhelming desire to make verbal and physical contact with the participants" ("Hagenbeck's" 172), and an interest in dancing, singing, and other cultural activities (Pers. interview). In some cases, sexual desirability was a key point of interest, such as noted by visitors to Hagenbeck's Ashanti shows (Rothfels 135-6). Indeed, Thode-Arora's research revealed that "flirtations, sexual contacts, love affairs and marriages were not uncommon between participants and spectators" ("Hagenbeck's" 172). However, the sexual allure of shows was not always welcomed in the media (or, presumably, by performers). Indeed, in some cases, it fed into negative stereotyping and gossip-style fearmongering. Of the "Savage South Africa Show" in London's Earl's Court, Cape Town's *Owl* newspaper reported on "the amatory adventures of the 'ladies' at Earl's Court with the Kaffirs in the Savage South Africa Show … ladies lolling in their victorias down West with a great hulking Kaffir beside them" (qtd. in Qureshi 163). Indeed, in 1899, women were banned from attending the Savage South Africa exhibition, given the "rumours of discreditable proceedings" (162). As McClintock writes in *Imperial Leather*, "By the nineteenth century, popular lore had firmly established Africa as the quintessential zone of

sexual aberration and anomaly" (22). She describes that, "Africa and the Americas had become what can be called a porno-tropics for European imagination – a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears" (22). It could be argued, therefore, that "human zoos" expanded on this "porno-tropic tradition" with "women figured as the epitome of sexual aberration and excess" (22). Such portrayals extended to London's famous exhibition space the Crystal Palace. Latham's guidebook *A Hand Book to the Courts of Natural History* accentuated cultural differences between civilised societies and those races engaged in cannibalism, headhunting and unfettered sexual morality, although he also praised the ability of some groups, such as the Javanese, to be "improved" (Qureshi 210).

Representations of performers in the range of venues described therefore varied among impresarios and showspaces, indeed among nations, but were unified in the fact that they were typically Eurocentric representations of the – usually "inferior" – "other". Except for a very few cases as will be outlined below, performers were rarely represented in a manner of their own choosing.

The role of 'science' in representing race – Eurocentric humanism?

In the oppositional article on "human zoos" referred to in Gabi Eissenberger's research, the German newspaper the *Magdeburger Zeitung* reported on the scientific examinations that accompanied the shows: "Scientists measure and put into tables everything, without difference – but what is gained from this?" (qtd. in Poignant 118). The question "What is gained from this?' is a pertinent one. In the words of Patricia Purtschert: "Human zoos of the late nineteenth century were crucial for the popular establishment of a racialised gaze, which drew heavily on the emerging scientific approach to the world" (520).

The late nineteenth century was a time when nations were moving away from slavery and towards Empire building (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 6). In the move towards showing ethnicities, rather than individual "freaks" as occurred earlier in the century, whole societies were portrayed as needing to be dominated, colonised and changed (11). Further, as the colonial period progressed, the representation of the "other" in human exhibitions also typically shifted, with shows displaying peoples who had been "tamed", then "civilised" (or Christianised in the case of missionary exhibitions), thus demonstrating the achievements of colonisation, or in cases where colonised people were deemed "too far gone", highlighting the need to exhibit and study these subjects before they disappeared (11, 16). Blanchard et al. summarise the concurrence of scientific racism and "human zoos":

> Hierarchies, both biological and cultural, were at this time combined with a range of anthropometric experimental techniques which provided racial discourse with a new regime for truth, just at the time when anthropological exhibitions were becoming common. ("The Greatest" 18)

While scientists may have been operating with objective goals, their methods and findings tended to reinforce myths of the "inferiority" or "peculiarity" of visiting groups. In general, the scientific community welcomed the ready access to examples of human diversity delivered to their doorsteps by exhibitors, and exhibitors welcomed the scientific validation of authenticity the scientists provided.

Anatomist Professor Rudolf Virchow from the University of Berlin, who studied, among many others, the Fraser Island performers as well as Aboriginal performers from Palm and Hinchenbrook Islands, commented that the "scientific" classificatory project was tackling the most important and largest question of "how man fits into nature" (Poignant 118). Consequently, European exhibitions became extensions of laboratories (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 16-17) with science seen as essential to legitimising the ethnic shows (16; Qureshi 108, 112) by confirming the authenticity of performers. In return, anthropology sought proof of its theories of race (Qureshi 38-43), employing physical anthropology, particularly anthropometric measurements, to make distinctions between groups of people, giving weight to the racial discourse (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 18). The outcomes of the studies were made known at public lectures held alongside the shows, or in entertainment venues such as Castan's Panoptikum in Berlin, where scientists (and pseudoscientists) disseminated "knowledge" about human variation, thereby shaping public opinion. Further, the large international exhibitions/world fairs of the nineteenth century used anthropologists to curate shows, which frequently represented racialist evolutionary hierarchies in the spatial arrangement of exhibits – from the most "primitive" peoples to the most "civilised", by implication, the audience members themselves – visually "validating" anthropological knowledge (Qureshi 186).

Although Darwin's theory of evolution was over-extended to apply to social evolution by the likes of Herbert Spencer in Britain and Ernst Haeckel in Germany – Haeckel used the theory to argue for a "racial hierarchy" that Darwin did not support – Darwin's attitudes on matters of race were not uncomplicated. He described the Fuegians he observed as "the most

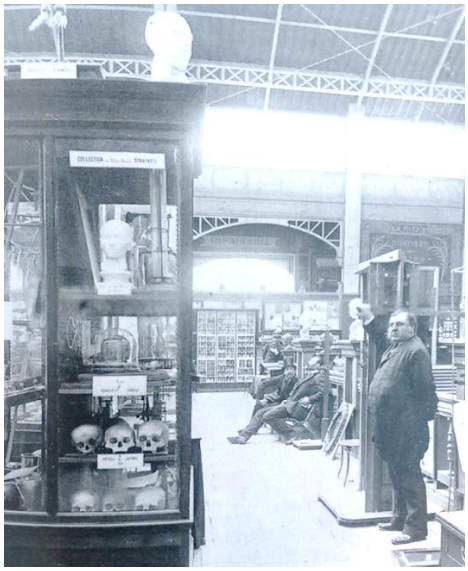

Fig. 7. Dr Paul Topinard, Universal Exhibition Paris 1889 (Source: Poignant 193)

abject and miserable creatures' (qtd. in Chatwin 121). Chatwin's travel narrative *In Patagonia* includes a retelling of the true story of the kidnap in 1830 of a Fuegian boy who, along with three other "wild" Fuegians, was taken to England aboard the HMS *Beagle*. Named Jemmy Button by the crew, the boy went on to attend boarding school and had an audience with William IV and Queen Adelaide (121). An early example of scientific interest in "native visitors", Button's audience was small; nevertheless, it signified the beginning of a long marriage between the science and exhibition of human diversity.

In Léonce Manouvrier's paper to the Anthropology Society of Paris in November 1881, Society members including Paul Topinard (Fig. 7) debated the "inferiority" or otherwise of a group of Fuegians displayed at the *Jardin d'Acclimatation*, Interestingly, and disturbingly, in a statement about the limitations of science conducted in association with human exhibition, Manouvrier questioned whether the group's shyness "whenever we attempted to proceed by surprise to lower a savage's underwear" might not be shyness but instead a reflection of their fear of their "keepers" (7). He went on to suggest that such fear must influence:

> all their acts, as much in their interactions amongst themselves as in their relations with us, and can we not understand, moreover, that a very intelligent man can appear to be considerably inferior to what he is in reality, even if he finds himself in surroundings little different from those in which he habitually lives? (8)

While Manouvrier seems blind to the frightening aspects of his own behaviour in attempting to undress the performers to examine them, his comments at least reveal some doubt that people brought to Europe for display would be behaving in a way that would yield meaningful scientific results.

In the same year, *Science* magazine republished an article first printed in *La Nature*, describing the Fuegians on public exhibition at Paris's Garden of Acclimation as presenting:

> an interesting spectacle to the observer. They are seen lying or squatting about the fire kindled under the trees of the large lawn, motionless for whole hours at a time, gazing with vacant eye at the astonished crowd which presses against the railings as though they contained remarkable animals. Do they think? We cannot tell this. Do they speak? Yes they do speak, if we can call the guttural sounds, the cluckings which at long intervals, they exchange with each other, a language. They remain there, indifferent, having no longer in operation the only cause which can agitate them, hunger; for they are fed. It is a curious sight, but also a sad one. A man at this stage of brutishness is not wholly an animal; but he is no longer a man. (514)

The article concluded by drawing a comparison with Australian Aborigines and, perhaps daringly for the day, wondered how the Fuegians might reflect on their experience in France:

> They have an intellectual capacity, latent, it is true, which appears superior to that of Australians. They learn languages with remarkable facility, and have a spirit of imitation carried to extremes, which ought to be utilized in order to teach them things well. The future will tell if those who are at present in the Garden of Acclimation, will derive any profit from their sojourn among us. Our opinion is that they will be delighted at finding themselves in their own homes, and the remembrance of all that they will have seen will remain in their minds as a dream which will not perhaps be wholly agreeable. (516)

Unsurprisingly, the Fuegians' actual experiences and thoughts were not recorded, and the biased views perpetuated in the broader media remained uncontested even a century later. Consequently, by the time Chatwin himself left Patagonia, the long history of mythmaking about the indigenous people of the region was deeply entrenched. When he asked a non-

indigenous man about two English friends of "Grandpa Felipe", the "last of the Yaghans", the man said, "He probably ate them" (Chatwin 126).

Although in the minority, there were scientists who openly opposed human exhibition and were critical of the impresarios involved. Poignant comments that a German, Professor Landois, described Cunningham – the impresario who transported the two groups of Aborigines from Palm and Hinchenbrook Island to America and Europe – as a "slave driver" and a man who "would show these savages, till the last breath had gone out of them" (14). In France, opinions of scientists at the *Société d'Anthropologie de Paris* began to change after the large number of human exhibitions of 1882-83, with concerns over a lack of authenticity and exhibitions becoming circuses (Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 17). Concerns were raised, too, over the welfare of performers. After witnessing the examination of a visiting troupe of performers at the 1889 *Paris Exposition Universelle*, scholar Henry de Valigny commented in *La Nature* that:

> never in their lives had natural men been more squeezed, manipulated and examined, and I shall long remember the intense curiosity with which one of the most eminent scientists in Vienna helped himself to each native who came within his reach, manipulating their skulls as though he wanted to crush them. (qtd. in Blanchard et al., "Human Zoos: The Greatest" 18)

Blanchard et al. write that, in France and Britain, anthropologists in general validated such exhibitions until 1885-90 and for some time later in Japan, Italy, Portugal, the United States and Germany (18). Until that time, "human zoos" were an amalgam of science and spectacle, often with the outcome of groups of people being categorised in hierarchies from "savage" to "civilised" at a time when colonies were expanding ferociously with devastating consequences for local indigenous populations.

Performers' viewpoints

What did the performers themselves make of the experience of being exhibited overseas? What, if any, agency did they have over how they were shown? Qureshi writes of a lack of performance testimonies and a reliance on newspaper vignettes to piece together their experiences (127):

> Unfortunately, the evidence required to explore these questions is woefully sparse, especially on the part of the performers. The problem partly lies in the relative lack of interest shown in recording displayed peoples' experiences in the nineteenth century. Even those most concerned with the treatment of performers rarely attempted to collect their testimony either systematically or in quantity. Thus, efforts to reflect on issues of agency, motivation, and consent involved in reconstructing the shows are frequently hampered by the difficulty of finding potentially relevant sources, such as diaries, letters, eyewitness accounts, or interviews …" (Qureshi 127)

Nevertheless, as Raymond Corby states, "The relative scarcity of sources concerning their intentions and feelings should not lead us to underestimate their subjectivity or to leave it understudied" (349).

Qureshi provides examples of hints of agency, of performers asking for better deals, better payment, and the "ways in which performers adapted to their new lives, often resisting being confined to the roles expected of them" (127). She points to accounts of American Indians competing to be selected for Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows in 1883 (134). Egan writes that:

> Gerónimo, the Apache chief, told a biographer that his experience during the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, in 1904, dramatically changed his perceptions of technologies, peoples, and money. He recalled that the fairs gave him the money to buy things in the marketplace for the first time in his life. (qtd. in Egan 16)

Egan suggests, "Participation in these events may have been a crash course in entrepreneurial, or at least survival, capitalism" (16). Qureshi, too, outlines instances of performer "power" in the case of George Henry (Anishinabe), a native person who toured a group of natives as a missionary manager (106), thereby owning the representation of his own people. Thode-Arora reports that the Somali performers of Hagenbeck's shows returned in subsequent years with more members of their families, eventually establishing profitable textile businesses back in their home country from the proceeds raised (Pers. interview). In her study of Sami participants (advertised as "Laplanders") and their exhibitors, Baglo also challenges the "a priori victimizing approach to the living exhibitions" (*Gone* Abstract), which she argues reinforces stereotypes of the performers as victims, aiming instead for a "far more nuanced picture of motivations, experiences and power relations" (*Gone* Abstract).

She quotes a Norwegian newspaper reporting on a Sami troupe that performed in London in 1885 as saying, they were all "relatively well off and seem motivated as much by travelling excitement as profit" (qtd. in Baglo, "Rethinking Sami" 151). Further, Baglo claims Sami performers often negotiated, and in some cases dictated the terms of their contracts (150), staying in good, even first-class, hotels and going on strike when conditions were not met, sometimes preferring to stay in zoos because of the peaceful surrounds and the care their animals received from zoo vets (148-9). Baglo therefore rejects the assumption of those scholars who argue that, even in contemporary reenactments of "human zoos", performers are "victims who lack the ability to influence or benefit from their circumstances" (137). Rather, she investigates the historical, social and economic conditions that existed in the Sami's homelands, which in the latter half of the nineteenth century were under pressure from colonisation, state control and forced assimilation (151), and demonstrates that rather than being hapless victims, the Sami exploited these exhibitions for their own ends during a time when their way of life became increasingly difficult (138). Displays of agency, or indeed examples of defiance, were not limited to Sami performers. Qureshi writes of a member of Cunningham's Aboriginal troupes being provoked to the point of fighting back and spearing a provocateur through his hat while on tour in America (126-7).

But, of course, performer experiences are likely to have varied considerably. A significant exception to the lack of recorded performer viewpoints in the telling of the story of "human zoos" is the rare account of an Inuit man, Abraham Ulrikab, one of eight Inuit from Labrador to arrive in Germany in 1880. The group were recruited by Adrian Jacobsen on behalf of Carl Hagenbeck, who in 1877 had already shown three Inuit from Greenland in Hamburg, Paris, Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Dresden, and Copenhagen. The first group were returned to their Greenland homes, "all sound and wealthy, having earned a total of 600 crowns" (Lutz xvii). Ulrikab kept a diary of his experiences and wrote letters to his "teacher" at the Labrador mission. The diary and letters have been translated into English by Hartmut Lutz and his students from the University of Greifswald, Germany, and published in 2005 as *The Diary of Abraham Ulrikab: Text and Context*. Ulrikab's accounts of leaving his home in the hope of earning money to pay off his and his father's debts provide a valuable glimpse into the life of a performer in his own voice. Of his experience, Ulrikab wrote in a letter to his "teacher":

> My dear teacher Eisner!
> I write to you, because *I'd* like to tell you the following.

> We are greatly sad. When they brought me to Europe, I probably totally ignored it at first, but then I prayed to the Lord continuously that He might teach me, if it really was a mistake, because I believe in all His words. But because I was in deep misery, I often prayed to God to help me to free myself from this and to hear my sighs, because I even wasn't able anymore to take care of my relatives, which I was usually able to do, even when I did not believe in my Lord and Saviour yet who died for me. In different kind of ways we have been lured, but even all this I didn't recognize. (qtd. in Lutz 4-5)

Ulrikab's diary, likewise, provides an indication of his Moravian faith and his suffering amid the audiences who crowd into their enclosure to see them (Lutz xxii):

> We will suffer a lot from homesickness. We will go to Dresden, Paris, England, Herrnhut, Petersburg, and Vienna, if it's true what they say …
> I will have faith in God here in Europe that nothing bad will come across; that even the evil people, who surround us all the time, cant harm us.
> (qtd. in Lutz 7)

Of Berlin, Ulrikab wrote:

> In Berlin, it is not really nice since it is impossible because
> of people and trees, indeed, because so many children
> come. The air is constantly *buzzing* from the sound of
> the walking and driving; our enclosure is filled up immediately. (12)

And then, surprising observations about the man who was, in effect, their employer, and Ulrikab's concern about Catholics:

> Mr. Hagenbeck has done much good to us: he gave us
> beds and a violin and music to me. (6)
> … pray for us, especially when we
> are in Catholic countries. (7)

Ulrikab, we therefore learn, was not only highly literate, he also played the violin. These are not aspects commonly captured in media accounts of Ulrikab's performances, which focused on sledge-riding, boating and seal hunting, and indicate the importance and value of first-hand accounts to understanding more about performers' experiences. Tragically, Ulrikab and his fellow travellers died of smallpox in Europe, and their bodies were dissected and mummified (Lutz xxiv).

Similar, forthcoming, translation work by researcher Cathrine Baglo concerns the experience in Europe of a Greenland Inuit performer, Kujagi. However, in this case the account is indirect and was told to members of the "Danish literary Greenland expedition" twenty-five years after Kujagi's performances ("Re: People Shows"). In emails dated 14 and 22 November 2018, Baglo said that she is aware of two accounts of Sami performers, one of which has been published (in Norwegian) by the son of a performer, who wrote the account from interviews with his father and uncle. The other, written directly by a performer, remains unpublished and tells the story of Trygve Danielsen from Røros in Norway, "the son of the Sámi rights activist Daniel Mortenson" ("Re: People Shows").

In North America, an attempt was made to sympathetically reconstruct the experience of a native American man who was shown and housed in the anthropology museum at the University of California. Ishi's story has been told in Theodora Kroeber's biography, *Ishi in Two Worlds*. In the book, Kroeber states that Ishi's self-respect and pride served:

> to discourage even the least perceptive white person from the benevolent superiority of the civilized to the primitive, of the first-class citizen to the second class. Many people, after a while, laughed with Ishi. He was no king's jester: no one ever laughed at him. (126)

However, it is interesting to note that Kroeber refers to the museum staff's concern over how to manage the "hundreds of strange and curious however friendly faces" (134) and the fact that "the museum was overrun with mountebanks and plain and simple exploiters with their offers" (129), as if the museum itself were not exploiting this man. Ishi reportedly disliked crowds; he "disliked the sweaty smell of people in numbers. It suggested to him the odor of old deer hide" (133). A rare insight into Ishi's thinking is gained by considering Ishi's use of the word *saltu* for white people – which meant being of another order but without either the denigration usual in the Western use of the word "native" or "primitive" or any suggestion of the "other" being a "superior being" (137). Kroeber portrays Ishi as a gentle and cheerful

man, at home in the museum that showed him, and with some say over how he was depicted. It was observed that he even enjoyed seeing the Wild West shows in which other Indians performed. Whether the account is accurate, whether it was how Ishi truly felt, will never be known, yet Kroeber's biography of Ishi is, at least, an attempt to consider Ishi's experience and a valuable contribution to highlighting the absences in the historical record. In a sad ending to Ishi's story, an article on the California Museum website states that, "The idea of an autopsy terrified Ishi, and he asked that his body be burned to liberate his soul. Against his wishes, his body was autopsied, and his brain sent to the Smithsonian" (Magagnini). Unfortunately, it seems, any agency Ishi had in life was extinguished upon his death.

Of the Aboriginal performers who visited America and Europe in the 1880s, Roslyn Poignant includes in *Professional Savages: Captive Lives and Western Spectacle* several short pieces of dialogue, some of which indicate the performers may have been making jokes at the Europeans' expense (131). Poignant's book is exceptional in its efforts to refocus attention on the performers' possible experiences.

Concerning the Fraser Island Aboriginal performers – Bonny, Dorondera and Jurano – who were taken to Europe in 1882-3 for exhibition and who feature in the creative component of this dissertation, there are scant facts. From newspaper reports, scientific articles and museum records, it is known that the group performed throughout Germany at locations including Hannover, where a "scandal" ended the performance (Thode-Arora, Pers. Interview), the Dresden Zoo ("Die Australneger" 238) and Berlin's Panoptikum – a world-famous waxworks museum and performance space ("Die 'deutsche Sudsee' in Berlin" D2-11). Bonny is known to have also performed in France (Brizon 41; "Le Boomerang"; "Les Samoyèdes") and Switzerland ("Fotokarten"; Rivet, "Re: Bonny was"). Sadly only a few, very short direct quotes from the trio were recorded by the scientists who examined them, so it is difficult to grasp the individuals' experiences.

In the early months of the group's time in Germany, the ethnographic review *Das Ausland* recorded that Bonny and Jurano believed that after their return to Queensland the following year, "ten boys" would make the same journey ("Australneger" 1039), which sounds optimistic, as if the experience, to that early point, had been favourable. The same article attempts to describe the personalities of each, their customs and their reactions to life in Europe, including the state of life in Queensland where:

> as soon as they see someone of dark colour, they will shoot at them. There is a war of extermination … it wouldn't take long and the natives would be wiped out. Nearer to

> the coast the relationship is different and better. There are some laws to protect the natives and even the trees since the fruits are their food (1037).

This account provides insight into the relations between Aboriginal people and the settlers/government in 1880s Queensland; however, there is no indication of the documented massacres that had occurred also on the coast, including on Fraser Island itself. The author – recorded as "H.V."; perhaps Herr Virchow? – is initially complimentary and positive in his descriptions of the three Badtjala visitors: "The three living Australians now in Germany speak relatively good English and the impression you get from them is of good natured, friendly, well-intentioned people, of cheerful mood with relatively quick perception" (1037). But he concludes that "the girl however proved to be very shy, closed and shamefaced" (1038). "H.V." describes Dorondera/Borondera as performing in a possum robe with a red border, standing there "timidly, modest and with her back to the audience" (1038). Dorondera is described as becoming more trusting only once her name was mentioned, and it is difficult not to wonder whether something occurred, beyond the day-to-day difficulties of her circumstances, to make her behave in this way. Was this back turning an act of defiance or protest on Dorondera's part? And, if so, what was she reacting to, or against? Was she afraid? With the kind assistance of Dr Birgit Scheps from Leipzig's *Museum für Völkerkunde* I was privileged to see the cast of Dorondera (also known in Europe as Susanne), which is kept in storage in a Dresden museum, and saddened to see in it a woman who appears distressed by her situation.

The *Das Ausland* article notes the group becoming accustomed to European food and developing an appreciation of money. It states Nurono's/Jurano's tendency to drink too much alcohol, a tendency which Bonangera (Bonny) is reported to have found disgusting. The article also describes the "attempted seductions when the Aboriginal men are approached by the female inhabitants of the big European cities" (1038). There is reference to the inadequacy of spears provided to the group for their use in performances in Germany, an account of the results of painstakingly detailed anatomical examinations, the men's ability to climb a forty-metre high tree "like monkeys" (1038), and the making of life casts of the two men in Dresden (1037). Interestingly, the casts of the group listed in museum archives in Dresden were in fact made at Castan's Panoptikum in Berlin, suggesting there were, in fact, two sets made. Also, the archives note that the cast of Jurano (who was also known as Alfred in Europe) was made after his death. This information reveals, for the first time, the fate of

one of the group: Jurano died in Germany, probably in Berlin where he was reported to have been hospitalised and where his death mask was made.

With the assistance of Dr Hilke Thode-Arora, then at the *Übersee-Museum* in Bremen, it became apparent that the Badtjala trio were almost certainly the same three Aboriginal people mentioned in the following documentation from Castan's Panoptikum:

> The Australian Aboriginals from Queensland, two young men and a young girl, were marveled at on the stage of the waxworks since January 1883. All three had been shown for several months in these rooms filled with many artefacts of South Seas people. ("Die 'deutsche Südsee' in Berlin" D2-12)

How long after this did Jurano die? No death record has been found for him, nor for Bonny or Dorondera. However, by the time Bonny was in Switzerland (Basel in June-July 1883 and Geneva on 9 August 1883), his Badtjala companions are absent from newspaper reports.

In the final records of Bonny, he is in Lyon, France, performing alongside a group of "Samoyèdes", people from Siberia ("Le Boomerang" 2; "Les Samoyèdes"). *Le Salut Public* reports on 3 September 1883, "Currently, in Lyon, we have an exhibition of Samoyèdes. These natives of Siberia are accompanied by an Australian negro who gives representations of tree climbing and boomerang throwing" ("Le Boomerang" 2). Of boomerang throwing, the account marvels that people "little more than monkeys" could accomplish something by "playing" that Europeans could not do, let alone understand (2). The article continues that the boomerang performance inspired a ballistics scientist to design a new type of bullet, building on the original design with "all the improvements that European superiority brings with it" (2). The article, the last known record of Bonny, is shocking in its blatant assumptions of racial hierarchy.

And what of accounts of the first Aboriginal visitor to Europe, Bennelong, who was shown less spectacularly and at an earlier time, receiving only one news report in his 21-month visit? His experience is unlikely to have been similar to that of Bonny and his compatriots, yet his rare first-hand account is valuable in its recording of his experiences in England, which were not ones he wished to repeat, and of his return home:

> Sir, I am very well. I hope you are very well. I live at the Governor's … I not my wife; another black man took her away; we have had murry doings: he speared me in the back, but I better now … all my friends

> alive and well. Not me go to England no more. I am at home now. I hope Sir you send me anything. (qtd. in Fullager "Bennelong" 47)

Conclusion

Internationally, European discourses on the foreign "other" came about initially through means such as travel literature and, less formally, through tales of travellers and returning ships' crews. Such accounts were repeated through a "recursive cycle of stereotypes" (Dreesbach) and expanded upon by local British, European and American writers of the nineteenth century who, it was likely, first came into contact with "foreign visitors" via the phenomena of "human zoos", which in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attracted over a billion spectators (ACHAC, "The Invention"). Given the large scale, global and largely uncontested nature of "human zoos" at the time, and the frequently validating scientific examinations that accompanied them, I argue "human zoos" played a major role in furthering and cementing racial stereotypes. This was notable in the advertising material of the shows themselves, although the extent varied depending on the impresario, the venue, and the national context. Stereotypes were also perpetuated in newspaper accounts, which mostly reproduced the shows' constructions of the, often, "lesser other".

Such representations were perhaps at their worst in cases such as the showman P.T. Barnum, who concocted lurid representations to draw crowds, claiming Aboriginal people were "cannibals" and "bestial", and in the mass exhibitions in France where large crowds watched performers from behind fences, although it is likely the fences were protecting the performers from the crowd, rather than the reverse. By contrast, there is evidence that at least some performers in Hagenbeck's shows in Germany had a degree of agency over how they were shown and, in the case of the Somalian performers, profited from their time in Europe, setting up businesses in their home country with the proceeds (Thode-Arora, Pers. interview). Baglo likewise argues that Sami performers worked under contract in performances and had agency over how they were represented and their living conditions ("Rethinking" 148). Indeed, Baglo challenges the "dominant trope of victimization" (138), writing instead that the Sami performers "exploited these exhibitions for their own ends" (138), ensuring they received benefits from their performances at a time when their homelands were being colonised (138). However, while some performances were a celebration of culture and skill, and some performers, such as the Sami groups, displayed agency, it is difficult to overlook the fact that many other shows were less positive in terms of both representation and, in all

likelihood, the experience of performers. Such shows, which often included endless rounds of scientific measurement and advertised performers, such as Australian Aboriginals, as "cannibals", furthered negative racial stereotypes of "inferior others".

Unfortunately, very few accounts exist from performers' perspectives to illuminate these issues. It is time, therefore, to reinterrogate this period in our history to shed light on the silences of the past, contest earlier accounts and imagine a different "truth", in short, to engage in a "reading and writing action" (Slemon 80) of resistance to the largely unchallenged stories of colonialism: a "counter-hegemonic work" (Parry 84).

CHAPTER 3

New histories – a case of appropriation or invisibility?

The great debate

Discussions around representation of the "other" in fiction have become highly topical and contentious in recent years, debated in both the mainstream media and academic circles. As Muecke points out, "representation is a well-recognised problem for post-colonial studies, Linguistics, Cultural Studies, for feminisms, for studies of class, and, of course, [in the Australian context] for the 'real' subjects whose identities are under discussion here – Aboriginal Australian peoples' (13). He argues "Aboriginality is constructed in discourse" (*Textual Spaces* 19), and that this (European) discourse has been historically anthropological, romantic and/or racist (24). It is understandable, therefore, that Aboriginal people are wary and tired of being written *about*, particularly if, as Muecke writes, it is an Aboriginal person's belief that "the essence of what 'they' are is known intuitively by the people themselves, and no-one else can have access to this knowledge" (19). "Truth telling" was the theme of the 2018 Australian indigenous festival known as Garma, which "brings together business leaders, international political leaders, intellectuals, academics and journalists to discuss the most pressing issues facing Australia" ("About Garma"). With this theme in mind, the question then arises: How best can a non-Aboriginal person respectfully contest historical misrepresentations of "race"?

More specifically, what role exists for the non-Aboriginal fiction writer, or, more generally, the fiction writer from outside any "marginalised" group, who seeks to contribute to the work of reflecting on and challenging a nation's history and present state, addressing issues such as racism? (I have placed inverted commas around the word "marginalised" not to suggest that societal groups are not often sidelined or indeed disadvantaged, but to signal that there are dangers to universalising such terms and, as theorist Gayatri Spivak writes, "establishing 'marginality' as a subject-position" ("Poststructuralism," 198).) Further, issues of confronting racism momentarily aside, what role is there for the non-Aboriginal fiction writers who wish their work to reflect simply an Australian society that is diverse and inclusive of indigenous people and their rich heritage? Should the burden of the work of deconstructing misrepresentations of Aboriginal people be left solely to Aboriginal people, who of course are themselves diverse despite naïve assumptions of the "undifferentiated *Other*" (Langton, "Well" 27), or is there a case for non-Aboriginal writers, who, having identified historically inadequate representations "which one must do further work on"

(Muecke 13-4), also to contribute to shining a light on past silences and (mis)representation, and to providing a dissenting, albeit imaginative viewpoint?

Author Lionel Shriver's keynote address at the 2016 Brisbane Writers' Festival drew global attention to the role of fiction in exploring issues of identity, particularly relating to "marginalised" groups. Shriver's presentation questioned the assertion that writing about another person or group's identity is "a form of theft" (Awad 11). In Shriver's view, trying on other peoples' hats, or stepping into their shoes, is what "we're paid to do, isn't it?" (qtd. in Awad 10). Social activist and engineer Yassmin Abdel-Magied did not see it this way and walked out of the talk, writing afterwards that "it was a monologue about the right to exploit the stories of 'others'" (Awad 11). On appropriation and the controversy over Shriver's comments at the Brisbane festival, Canadian author Margaret Atwood was quoted in *The Australian* newspaper as saying, "We've been through this a lot … This has been going on for at least 20 years. And it always comes to the same dead end and the same dead end is does that mean the only thing you can write about is our own personal life?" (Wilson 15). Atwood points out that, "Nineteenth-century male writers spent a lot of time imagining what it was like to be a woman. *Madame Bovary*. Was that wrong? … One of the great strengths of fiction is that it allows you to imagine what it is like to be another person, and by doing that it increases empathy. Are you going to throw that out the window?" (15). In this vein, Anthony Horowitz, who writes the Alex Rider spy novels, was warned off including a black character by his editor and responded that if that line of thought was taken to the extreme "all my characters will from now be 62-year-old white Jewish men living in London" (Low). Nevertheless, Shriver's address, published in the Australian edition of *The Guardian*, and, I would argue, particularly its unapologetic tone evidenced in its championing of fiction's "disrespectful" nature ("Lionel Shriver's full speech"), continues to spark debate.

On 5 June 2018, Radio National's *The Hub* featured a conversation between six Australian authors on the theme "The Great Debate: Write What You Know", which provides a useful overview of the arguments around representation of the "other" in fiction. In the debate, Noongar writer Claire Coleman strongly opposed the idea of writing outside of your knowledge base when it concerns Aboriginal Australians. In her view, non-Aboriginal writers entering this territory have "stolen our discourse". Coleman stated that non-Aboriginal writers should "let the marginalised tell their own stories" because there will be "someone else who knows better than you", and that non-Aboriginal writers are not equipped to write Aboriginal characters because "the character becomes an aspect of the writer", and that "all they get is a different European". As part of the same debate, author Graeme Simsion said

that while (non-marginalised) writers avoiding speaking outside of what you/they know might avoid misrepresentation of "marginalised" people it was at "the price of their [the marginalised's] invisibility". Writer Michelle Aung Thin discussed the role of writing for developing empathy: "Is it not through empathy that we develop our own ethics? … If we can't write the new by that deep dive into the imagination, how do we change the status quo?" Author Bram Presser challenged the definition of knowledge and spoke of "learnt knowledge" being an alternative to something experienced. That a writer can "know" of something by imagining it deeply, by researching and working with the material. These conflicting viewpoints considered, how can a non-indigenous writer approach these issues of high importance to Australian, indeed global, society? In answer, Claire Coleman stated that if you must include Aboriginal characters, just "don't do it from their point of view, or go into the thoughts in their head".

Australian Author magazine similarly took on this issue in its November 2017 issue. Here, writer Abdel-Fattah describes the importance of not co-opting "a space that minorities are rarely given any chance to intervene in, to write in" (12). This is a common concern: that, in the Australian context, a non-Aboriginal writer publishing on a topic relevant to Aboriginal Australia might be preventing an Aboriginal writer, who it is argued has less access to publication, from publishing a related work. Creating more space in publishing for indigenous stories told by indigenous writers therefore warrants attention and may contribute to a solution for misrepresentation and invisibility. If this were to occur, if there was a greater pool of indigenous writing for Australian society to draw its understanding from, would it become less necessary to censor the representation of indigenous people (or people from any minority group) by non-indigenous writers (writers from the majority group), or are both – more Aboriginal writing and less writing on Aboriginal themes by non-indigenous writers – being called for? If it is a case of both, does restricting the representation of Aboriginality to Aboriginal people (or the representation of any minority group to writers from that group) risk pigeonholing these writers while producing a lack of diversity in the other Australian stories, those by non-indigenous/minority writers. Indeed, would such restrictions see many "Australian" stories not only failing to reflect our national diversity, but avoiding combatting issues of racism or other prejudice? Some claim that is already happening globally.

In the UK journal *Prospect*, Lionel Shriver argues that because of the cultural appropriation and "thought crime" (20) storm, "plenty of writers must be playing it safe with characters, topics and plots that won't get them into trouble … we have no record of what a host of individual authors have decided to avoid" (20). Shriver talks of her literary agent

suggesting she change a black character to a white one, which Shriver declined to do, and the story went unpublished (20). Anthony Horowitz wrote of also being discouraged from writing a black character (21). And there is the rub. Historically, representations of "marginalised" people have been woefully scant, as argued by author Justina Ireland who calls this phenomenon "An Apartheid of the Imagination":

> In all of my reading and book devouring, not once did I read a book that featured a black girl or woman. … Magic, love, and heart-stopping action just didn't happen for black girls. We didn't exist in those spaces, in those books. It was an apartheid of a different kind, a literary genocide for black women, and by extension, an apartheid of the imagination.

Ireland goes on to quote figures from the Cooperative Children's Book Center at University of Wisconsin Madison's School of Education, writing that:

> In 2015, a year of Donald Trump "telling it like it is," 106 books were published by black authors, with a total of 269 books being about black main characters. Doesn't sound too bad, right? Until you realize that about 3,400 books were published under the children's publishing umbrella last year.

Increasing the number of stories written by people from minority groups would of course go some way to addressing this shortfall, but if writers from the majority groups avoid writing outside of their assumed understanding, there will remain an imbalance. Indeed, will the apparent contemporary reluctance of "white" writers to include anyone other than "white" characters in their stories see the "marginalised" become even more so? Further, is a scenario where writers write only "their own" stories not taking us back to a time of segregation and separationism, a time when people were identified according to their "race" or other form of identity? Is a "white" writer's avoidance of writing about "black characters" in fact racist; that is, is such "respectful" avoidance achieving the opposite of its intention? Do we not need more representation, more diversity, by varied authors from different perspectives? In the article "Representation Matters: A Literary Call To Arms", K. Tempest Bradford calls on writers to:

> Reject the idea that you can't include a type of character in your fiction and instead … work on finding ways that you can. Just don't fall into the trap of thinking that any representation should be welcomed by groups who lack it … The problem with accepting bad representation as the norm or as desirable going forward is that it leads to more bad representation, more stereotypes, more offensive caricatures. And that has a negative psychological effect on the people represented.

Editors and publishers have a role here to act as gatekeepers that close the door on poorly-drawn characters, recognising that poor representation is poor writing. But readers, too, have the ability to dismiss representations they do not agree with, to respectfully refute them if necessary, for it is through discourse itself, as proposed by Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, that "the truth" or "truths" will emerge.

And what of the important matter of a writer's intent, as raised by Peter Polites in *Australian Author* magazine (Awad 12)? A non-indigenous writer replaying stereotypical and damaging representations with the intent of further dispossessing a group of people should, hopefully, be dealt with by the process of gatekeeping mentioned above, but what of a non-indigenous writer with the opposite intent? Langton writes that "There is a naïve belief that Aboriginal people will make 'better' representations of us, simply because being Aboriginal gives 'greater' understanding … This thinking is as much based on fear of difference as is white Australian racism" ("Well" 27). If a non-indigenous writer, aware of flaws in the colonial record or injustices in modern society, wishes to provide a dissenting view, an anti-colonial or anti-racist view that is empathetic to the plight of this nation's indigenous people, and respectfully includes Aboriginal characters to achieve this, is that not constructive? Or are non-indigenous writers to be judged not because of their arguments but because of the colour of their skin? Their assumed history? Their privilege?

And what of the *process* itself – the reading and writing task? Is there merit, in terms of empathy-building in postcolonial societies, in doing the work of trying to write or read the "other"? That is, is the exercise of imagining oneself into another's shoes and walking around in them valuable in its own right? Fiction is not an account of how the world *is* for an entire group of people. It is one person, a writer, imagining what a certain circumstance *might be like* for this person or that person or another person. Perhaps the writer is correct, perhaps not. Fiction is a means of trying something out in an imaginary way and seeing if it works. There are risks of making errors, but there are also risks of omission, of writers writing only from

their own cultural silos, however they define them. Such censoring risks making the "other" invisible.

Bridging the divide

The *New York Times* published an article in August 2017 called "I'm a White Man. Can I Continue?" in which Frank Bruni writes that if "White men have one 'epistemology', and black women have another … where are the bridges?" He acknowledges that "Race, gender, sexual orientation, class: All of this informs – and very often warps – how we see the world. And for much too long, this country's narrative has been scripted by white men …" but quotes author Phoebe Maltz Bovy (*The Perils of 'Privilege'*) who told him that while she applauds an awareness of "systemic injustice and systemic inequality" she worries that, as Bruni paraphrases it, "privilege apologies have ferried us to a silly, self-involved realm of oppression Olympics. They promote the idea that people occupying different rungs of privilege or victimisation can't possibly grasp life elsewhere on the ladder." In the *New York Times* article Bruni asks, "Should we really have say and sway only over matters that neatly dovetail with the category that we've been assigned (or assigned ourselves)? Is that the limit of our insights and empathies? … That kind of thinking fosters estrangement instead of connection." He rejects the "assumptions – otherwise known as prejudices – that certain life circumstances prohibit sensitivity and sound judgement while other conditions guarantee them. That appraises the packaging more than it does the content. It ignores the complexity of people. It's reductive." Australian writer and academic Greg Dening also rejects the idea that one group can tell another that they cannot attempt to understand its point of view: "what the dispossessed do not have the right to say, in my opinion, is that there is no entry into their otherness by those who do not share it. That leads to nihilism" ("Performing" 4). Writing only "oneself" also seems regressive, for how can writers raise and confront what Bovy described as "systematic injustice and systematic inequality" (qtd. in Bruni) if they avoid writing about or including groups considered "marginalised"?

In "Can a Poem Listen?", in which poetry could apply equally to fiction, American poet Ailish Hopper writes, "The self-censoring and sense of futility that white people may experience are not disruptive, but part of race's design, a narrative policing that preserves the roles and power by not presenting, which is to say suppressing, information that runs counter to race's claims." Instead Hopper asks writers to consider:

> Are we *writing race and racism*, reinforcing the white viewpoint, which is designed not to threaten its own power? Or, are we *rewriting* race and racism, not merely representing, but disturbing; showing not just whiteness – but what it is to be awake, and disruptive, inside it?"

Hopper goes on to say of white poets delving into history that:

> there can be an ethical force to some of these attempts if they are successful in restoring to view what whiteness has tried to erase – which is to say, the workings of white power, itself … No matter our racialization, there are narratives to silence us about moments, sites, events, that call up traumas in many of our minds. For us to speak freely, from whatever place in the system, threatens power, and racism in America is about defending power, the power of white people … a white poet attempting to write from her own racialized experience must enter these closed spaces.

Confronting these spaces, Hopper suggests, is an answer to "a longing for something better", an attempt to address what Toni Morrison's describes as the harm racism inflicts on our "romance of community", and the kind of poetic act of resistance that bell hooks calls for in *Talking Back* (qtd. in Hopper).

Still on the issue of identity politics, but moving outside of race and cultural appropriation to that of disability, Robert Hoge, author of *Ugly*, extends the argument in an article on ABC Online:

> We must encourage storytellers to engage with themes about disability. It's time to tear down that wall ... We need more stories about disability in fiction. We need more characters with a disability in fiction. We need more writers to take more risks and tell more complex stories about disability. And those stories can and must be written by anyone who wants to tell them – disabled or not … the only way to celebrate disability, to engage with it in a much broader, more positive way in fiction is for us to stop being gate-keepers.

Similarly, author and academic Jessica White, who examines deafness and disability in her writing, invites non-disabled writers to engage with the topic as "our job is to create empathy

through our characters and this entails creating a wide cast" (Awad 15). Ideally, as Bradford summarises:

> For writers and other creators of fictional worlds, 2017 and beyond needs to be about crafting characters and fictions that don't support or excuse or ignore colonialism, marginalization, and other forms of oppression. That means creating inclusive fiction that reflects … the diversity of the world we all live in.

Theoretical offerings

What can literary theory, specifically, aspects of postcolonial theory, or as Langton would prefer *anti*-colonial theory ("Well" 8), offer as possible solutions to making literary forays into the territory of retelling the story of "human zoos"? Leela Gandhi writes that postcolonialism is a:

> theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath … a disciplinary project devoted to the academic task of revisiting, remembering and, crucially, interrogating the colonial past … the scene of intense discursive and conceptual activity, characterised by a profusion of thought and writing about the cultural and political identities of colonised subjects. (4-5)

By this definition, postcolonialism seems an appropriate framework to begin approaching the subject of the exhibition of living humans in colonial times. More so if postcolonialism also offers a "therapeutic retrieval of the colonial past" (5), a way of gaining "sense out of that past" (5), and, via fields such as experimental histories, of even being an "action": a re-historicising as Hopper called for in "Can a Poem Listen?".

According to Latoya Peterson, cited in Aisha M Beliso-De Jesus *Confounded Identities*, "The divide and conquer mentality of identity thinking was created … to govern non-white populations … it tugs at the strings of what we think of ourselves to be. It seems to envelop who we are." Further, Beliso-De Jesus argues, "academic identity thinking sequesters identity-based subjects into ghettoized enclaves of representations, and has become a neutralizing system used to manage difference." In short, such approaches perpetuate and cement the racialisation and racism they were designed for. Not that I wish to suggest an approach that ignores, or disrespects, difference is helpful. As the Honorable Fred Chaney, former co-chair of Reconciliation Australia, said on *Big Ideas* (12 July 2018), what

we need is "recognition of continuing difference" and a "genuine respect for indigenous culture". So how to respect difference while bridging the perceived cultural divide through literary representations of one another?

Of relevance to the challenge of writing across such dichotomies as "black" versus "white, "colonised" versus "coloniser" are concepts such as postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha's "hybridity": a rejection of the colonial discourse as "binary oppositions between self and other, between the speaking subject and the silent 'native'" (Mongia 7). Bhabha draws on Foucault's concept of power/knowledge, describing it as one that "places subjects in a relation of power and recognition that is not part of a symmetrical or dialectical relation – self/other" ("The Other" 42). This concept is important in terms of not limiting conversations, or literature, to the binary positions of subject/object. Indeed, "hybridity" as a theory for crossing boundaries and negotiating the dichotomies of "othering" seems constructive if intercultural/intersectional understanding, even empathy, is to be reached among groups or individuals with divergent viewpoints. Although the term has negative connotations in terms of the power of the coloniser "to interrogate, and to define identities for, the colonised" with regard to inter-racial mixing and, in the Australian context, how Aboriginal a person is deemed to be (Anderson 4), Bhabha's definition stands apart from these interpretations, and it is this discourse-oriented interpretation of hybridity that is discussed here. For the *post*-colonial to be achieved, the discussion must move beyond either a monologue from a hegemonic standpoint, or a dialogue of contributions from two constructed sides, typically read to be "coloniser" versus "colonised", where it is assumed those identities are fixed. If, by contrast, identities, knowledge and power are distributed, indeed entangled, via a more web-like interconnectedness as purported by Foucault, and more recently scholars such as Tracey Banivanua Mar, there opens up a possibility of "deconstructing and displacing the Eurocentric premises of a discursive apparatus which constructed the Third World" in the first place (Parry 84). Banivanua Mar disrupts the assumed binary dialogue and power relationship between colonised and coloniser by exposing the "new insights and historical depth that can be gained from observing the subaltern, subjugated and subversive webs of connections that existed between colonized peoples" ("Introduction" 10-11). With a focus on the Pacific, Banivanua Mar investigates the:

> dialogue that indigenous peoples maintained with colonial powers, and in which they asserted their right to choose the best and reject the worst of colonization … subversive mobilities; religious sovereignty and autonomy movements … and other

> subtle expressions of decolonisation that expanded beyond the territorial confines of colonial and national borders. (4)

Such representations of colonised people resisting the understood binaries are powerful reminders of the new possibilities that exist in retelling history.

Gail Jones opens her book *Sorry*, "There is a hush to difficult forms of knowing, an abashment, a sorrow, an inclination towards silence." The profound statement identifies not only the weight of past silences, of suppressed knowledge and trauma, but the ongoing tendency towards silence when confronting our shared histories. To move towards the truly *post*-colonial, there must exist a dialogue of viewpoints that acknowledges that there are multiple perspectives to colonial and modern-day events. Such dialogue would see writers seeking greater understanding through a process of research and, where there are silences, through imagination. At the same time, they must acknowledge their own subjectivity and the "riskiness of speech and the authorization to speak" (Muecke 184). Slemon writes of the idea of the "Second World" literatures, understood to be the "ex-colonial settler literatures" (79) such as those of settler-Australia and New Zealand, neither of the motherland nor of the colonised peoples themselves, currently being jettisoned from postcolonial literary writing (75). However, Slemon suggests these literatures in fact offer "a critical manoeuvre, a reading and writing action" (80) that has the potential to offer literary forms of postcolonial resistance from its intermediate, ambiguous position (80). Indeed, the "Second World" could be read as any attempt to reject binary absolutism and stand "in between" differing viewpoints. The possibility of writing out of the "Second World" could address the concern that the "idea of anti-colonial resistance" might be "synonymous with Third- and Fourth-World literary writing". Such a notion assumes all literary writing from these spaces includes radical content, and limits anti-colonial writings to these groups (75). Slemon claims that currently "the new binaristic absolutism … seems to be working in several ways to drive that trans-national region of ex-colonial settler cultures away from the field of post-colonial literary representation" (77). The question that needs to be asked is, at what cost?

This takes us back to Shriver's concerns about writers (and agents and editors) writing out "marginalised" characters and stories from "white" writers' texts in an effort not to offend, while achieving perhaps a worse crime: that of ignoring other viewpoints and whitewashing aspects of a shared history. Perhaps if the idea of the "Second World" were read as any genuine means of "writing between", as "bridge building", we may see progress

towards healing some of the damage of colonialism? If so, how is this state best achieved in practice?

In the Japanangka Errol West Lecture at the University of Tasmania in July 2018, Professor Marcia Langton identified collaboration between indigenous and non-indigenous people, given proper attribution to the traditional sources of knowledge, as necessary. Advice on correct acknowledgement is included in the *Ethical Publishing Guidelines* released by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). The guidelines draw on a paper presented by Terri Janke at the Sydney Writers Festival in 2010 in which Janke said:

> All we have left is our stories. And that too, is under threat when other people publish and circulate stories without consent, without attribution and where the authenticity of the story has been compromised.

The guidelines therefore stipulate that:

> It's important that the people whose lives are being discussed, or whose stories are being told, are clear about the kinds of publications that will evolve or that they are consulted about publications … The deep and ongoing impact of cultural hurt on individuals and communities cannot be understated. ("Ethical")

Consultation, however, requires indigenous people taking on the weight of educating non-indigenous writers and reviewing content, and must be approached sensitively with this in mind. Yet, it is also an opportunity for intercultural exchange, in itself an action, a necessary discourse in the path towards knowledge and true *post*-colonialism. The alternative is a situation where poorly informed writers produce further misrepresentations of the "other", or resign themselves to the separationist ideals of extreme identity politics at work, politics which may, ironically, through omission, give power to racism or any other "-ism" those principles aim to address.

It is incumbent upon readers, too, to recognise that a fiction writer writing about another person or group, not their "own", may bring a different understanding to that discussion than a writer from within that group. It is readers then whose responsibility it is to consider how to incorporate each offering into their own knowledge base.

One framework that may be helpful with respect to representing groups considered "other" in fiction, and one that I employ to a degree in the creative component of this dissertation, is experimental fiction. Elements of this category utilised in *Paris Savages* include mixed genre writing and fictocriticism. Mixed genre writing is described by Smith as a "bending and blending of genres" (192), which can include a mix of fiction and non-fiction (200). Fictocriticism, in this context, involves the bringing together, whether implicitly or overtly (210), of research and a creative work; as Brewster summarises: a bringing together of ideas/theory with emotions (qtd. in Smith 205). Such techniques are often considered transformative or transgressive, and offer a means by which writers might upset the usual hierarchies and think afresh about identity in ways that are both questioning and political. They provide a way of exploring the possibilities for new discourses, such as "survival and independence" (qtd. in Mueke 24) as identified by Susan Sheridan. Does such writing also provide techniques that may allow cultural differences to be portrayed in a non-appropriating manner? I would answer: potentially, through the considered use of voice and point of view. Certainly, using fiction to rethink history has the potential to shine a light on the gaps in the historical record. As Greg Dening says, "imagination is not really fantasy … Imagination is seeing what's absent, hearing the silence as well as the noise" ("Writing: Praxis" 6.1). In summary, frameworks such as experimental writing — and I would argue more specifically experimental, or even speculative history, which explores not just the recorded history, but what, with research, could have conceivably occurred — offer tools to answer Hopper's call for writing styles that are "Infiltrative, not merely representational".

How does *Paris Savages* sit within the landscape of other novels being written on Aboriginal issues? A personal, subjective account of the birth of a novel.

In a large storage room in the basement of the *Musée d'Histoires Naturelles* in Lyon, France, stands a rare relic of the colonial era: a full-body plaster cast of an eighteen-year-old Badtjala man from *K'gari* (Fraser Island), Queensland. It is dated 1883 – a time of intense colonial expansion in Australia and globally. The man who we now know was called Bonangera or Berondera (Bonny) stands naked and holds a boomerang over his head. The plaster has been painted a dark brown. His eyes, by contrast, have been coloured red. Rows of horizontal cicatrices, or tribal markings, are clearly visible on his chest. Bonny appears proud, his expression serious, perhaps somber. It is likely he was concealing pain, for the gypsum plaster used in the period was often contaminated with lime and burnt the skin. But it is impossible to know how he truly felt, because there are no first-hand records of his

experience as an Aboriginal man transported to Europe with two compatriots for the purpose of exhibition.

When not being wrapped in plaster-soaked bandages, or examined by scientists intent on developing theories, often hierarchies, of "race", Bonny performed in various capacities throughout Germany, France and beyond. He threw boomerangs, participated in mock fights with fellow Badtjala man Jurano (22 years), and climbed tall poles only vaguely reminiscent of the giant satinay and hoop pine trees that grew out of sand on his island home. He sang in a voice described in the German newspaper *Illustrirte Zeitung* in September 1882 as being reminiscent of "the monotone negro melodies of America" ("Die Australneger" 238), performed mock fights (Fig. 8), and danced. Bonny and Jurano were accompanied by Jurano's niece, Dorondera (14/15 years).

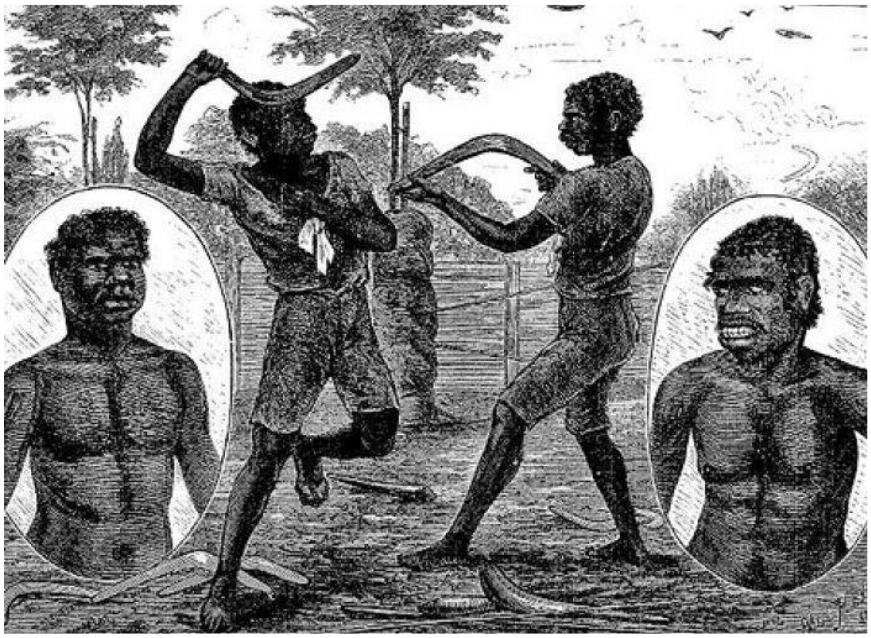

Fig. 8. "*Australneger im Zoologischen Garten zu Dresden*." (Source: *Illustrirte Zeitung, 9* Sept.1882, p. 249)

I saw Bonny's cast in the winter of 2012 with the assistance of staff at the Lyon museum, which was in the process of being relocated. The building stood silent, bandaged across the front with a banner alerting visitors that the new, re-named museum – the *Musée des Confluences* – was due to open in two years. Inside, it was quiet, but for the crisp footsteps of the remaining staff. I was taken to the basement's vast storage space of items, many of which, in this "postcolonial" period, have not been exhibited for many years, not even when the museum was open.

Along one wall of the storage room was a canoe used by "Laplanders", Sami people from the northern Arctic, who were also exhibited throughout Europe, most notably at Carl Hagenbeck's Thierpark in Hamburg and at Paris's *Jardin d'Acclimatation*. Much of the remainder of the room was taken up with white vertical storage stacks, concertinaed together to form a solid block. As the museum curator turned the handle to open the compactus, it was as if she was winding back the hands of time. I glimpsed masks and shields collected from various nineteenth-century outposts. There were countless artifacts. And then I saw Bonny, staring straight ahead, his expression unchanged for 129 years. The cast was so lifelike it was almost as if I was staring at the man himself, standing as he had no doubt been asked to stand. Every detail, including the ceremonial cicatrices carved into his chest and every pore of his skin, had been captured accurately. Yet, for all that detail, the cast remained silent. Our knowledge of the man and his compatriots comes from accounts of scientists and exhibitors. What little is known of Bonny's story was explored in an award-winning ABC radio documentary, *Cast Among Strangers* ("Cast"). There was one question that plagued me in that moment as I stood, almost as if face-to-face with Bonny: What if that cast could speak?

The cast in many ways epitomises the story of "human zoos" in its representation of an Aboriginal man wielding a boomerang for an audience, but mute. In an era aspiring towards postcolonialism, the cast is compelling, and the silences chilling. Seeing it in person demands attention. For me as a writer, the question was whether it was time to find imaginative ways of retelling the story of "human zoos" to challenge the "racial" stereotypes that the shows constructed. And, if so, how to attempt to respectfully approach a more balanced telling in a way that did not overlook the imagined experience of the performers themselves. Indeed, to turn the spotlight from the actors onstage and back out into the audience. To ask questions that we will never know the answers to, but that need to be asked if the colonial story is to be "infiltrated" as Hopper calls for, questions such as: What were the performers' perceptions of the countries they visited? What did they make of the audiences? Did they attempt to oppose the way they were being represented? Did they have any say at all? What were their lives like outside of the performances? What might have been their other interests and desires? Sadly, Bonny did not leave a diary like the Inuit man, Abraham Ulrikab, so the task is difficult. Some would say, impossible. Perhaps it is, but is the very act of trying to imagine Bonny's feelings and experiences a constructive exercise, an act of, as Hopper described it, "*rewriting* race and racism, not merely representing, but disturbing [it]"? An important consideration here, I believe, is making overt where the scant facts of the story end and where the fiction begins, a distinction I make in the afterword of the

creative component of this dissertation: the novel *Paris Savages*. Other key issues are voice and point of view, which will be elaborated on in this chapter.

I came to the story of Bonny via the radio documentary *Cast Among Strangers*. Extensive research on the topic of "human zoos", including the visit to see the cast of Bonny in Lyon, followed. Prior to commencing this PhD, I emailed my plans for a novel to Badtjala artist and academic Dr Fiona Foley, who informed her community and agreed to fact check relevant parts of the novel with regard to Badtjala content. I travelled to exhibition sites in Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Paris, Lyon and Brussels and conducted interviews with academics and archivists in the field of human exhibition. I viewed copies of casts of the other Aboriginal performers who visited Europe and tried to interpret their expressions.

But how to tell this story in practice? To speak directly from the Aboriginal trio's point(s) of view risks appropriating and/or misrepresenting these Aboriginal stories as Coleman stated ("The Great"), yet to omit the performers' viewpoints is to repeat the silences of the past and, I would argue, submit to the racism of old. Nevertheless, I am not an Aboriginal person, and want to avoid what Foley describes as a "double colonising" of history (F. Foley, "When the" 5). I am wary, too, of reenacting voyeurism as Qureshi describes it (10), which is not without precedent regarding the Aboriginal people of Fraser Island. Indeed, there has been a long history of myth making about the Badtjala/Butchulla, including Eliza Fraser's own telling of her "captivity" story, recently "critiqued within Australia for its inherent racism, its silencing of Aboriginal voices and fates" (McNiven et al. 9). Later texts that referenced the Fraser story include Patrick White's *A Fringe of Leaves*, which describes the travails of a shipwrecked white woman, "a civilized lady standing surrounded by this tribe of scornful blacks" (P. White 263), and of the Aboriginal women who "dragged her with them" (282) as a "captive" (282).

The theme of the "first white woman to encounter Aborigines in the wild, so to speak, and to tell her (less than sympathetic) tale" (Schaffer 1) was also taken up by Sidney Nolan's famous "Mrs Fraser" series (1947-77), which paints Eliza Fraser as a brutalised victim, and the bawdy, comedic 1976 film *Eliza Fraser.* Such "dominant accounts … are marked by shifting power relations as they intersect with Eurocentric understandings of gender, class and race" (Schaffer 19), the narration of each firmly within Western discourses, "each … a site of contestation; all are challenged by Aboriginal perspectives" (Schaffer 3). Foley writes that "Forgotten negatives and relics of 'exotic types' in colonial collections are being colonised for a second time by some artists" (F. Foley, "When the" 5), while also flagging that "Most people are not aware of this history because it continues to be silenced" (qtd. in

Preece). The two quotes highlight the challenging line that must be walked by the artist/novelist in this space.

Richard Flanagan referred to the need to lift silences in his address to the Garma festival in August 2018, when he spoke of Australia's "terrible story, a story of shame, but it is my story as much as it is your story, and it must be told, and it must be learned, because freedom exists in the space of memory, and only by walking back into the shadows is it possible for us all to finally be free". But how to proceed in a way that makes respectful use of the archive to highlight past silences? What protocols exist to address the enormous challenges of telling stories that include Aboriginal characters and that concern issues of historic invisibility or misrepresentation as outlined in this chapter?

In the Northern Land Council's Protocol for filmmakers on Aboriginal land, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner in Arnhem Land*, there is the objection to Aboriginal people being regarded as "having little use other than as an exotic backdrop" (qtd. in Langton, "Well" 19), yet the protocol strongly criticises a film proposal whereby a sympathetic white female protagonist tells what is regarded as an Aboriginal story. And what of Flanagan's Garma argument of shared ownership of Australia's sorry past? If it is indeed the case that as an Australian, any Australian, it is beholden on all of us to regard such stories as being at the very fabric of this nation, stories that we all must confront and make sense of as best we can, how do we negotiate the challenges that appear mutually exclusive?

In 1992, Marcia Langton wrote an essay for the Australian Film Commission, but which applies equally to other artforms, entitled, 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the television'. In this essay, which Langton describes as being about the politics of representation, she writes that her goal is to "move boundaries and undo the restrictions that make it so difficult for any of us to speak" (7). She writes that, "In film, as in other media, there is a dense history of racist, distorted and often offensive representation of Aboriginal people" (24). However, Langton argues that "demands and strategies for controlling representation do not by themselves work to produce a better representation of Aboriginal people" (9-10). "To demand complete control of all representation … is to demand censorship, to deny the communication which none of us can prevent" (10). "Can we decolonize our minds? Probably not. But we can try to find ways to undermine the colonial hegemony" (8). After all, "The easiest and most 'natural' form of racism in representation is the act of making the other invisible" (24). Langton calls for "a body of knowledge on representation of Aboriginal people and their concerns in art, film, television and other media

and a critical perspective to do with aesthetics and politics, drawing from Aboriginal world views, from Western traditions and from history" (28).

Langton describes three categories of representation: when Aboriginal people represent themselves, when white people with no knowledge or dialogue with Aboriginal people stereotype and mythologise, and a third, when constructions are generated by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people engaging in actual dialogue – whereby "the individuals involved will test imagined models of the other, repeatedly adjusting the models as the responses are processed, to find some satisfactory way of comprehending the other" (35). She presents an argument on "intersubjectivity and intertextuality: the need to test imagined models against each other" (34-35).

There is a need for "discourse" as proposed by Foucault, which Langton describes as a system of power whereby "The subject speaks back, and the dominant culture is informed by Aboriginal cultural practices, particularly practices of resistance" (36). Langton writes, "The problem of discussing the politics and aesthetics in film and television production by or about Aborigines lies in the positioning of us as object, and the person behind the camera as subject" (39). This is not to forget that, as Langton says, "The creative efforts of … artists to represent some particular Aboriginal 'reality', even if there is an attempt at involving the Aboriginal subject in the production, is always a fictionalization, an act of creative authority" (40). These seem like useful guidelines for non-indigenous writers to keep in mind when approaching Aboriginal issues.

Yet, even given consultation, there has still been controversy about the right of non-indigenous writers to enter this space. Author Kate Grenville consulted with Darug descendants according to accepted Australia Council protocols in writing *The Secret River* (Janke, "Writing: protocols" 6), a novel about settler/Aboriginal interactions set on the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales. She did not assume the voice of an Aboriginal protagonist, and restricted dialogue by Aboriginal characters to just a few lines towards the end of the book: "*This me*, he said. *My place*" (Grenville 329). However, she was still criticised by some, including reviewer Carol Merli, for "narrating a history that isn't hers to tell" (qtd. in Staniforth 9).

Criticism was also levelled at author David Malouf for his portrayal of a "hybrid" man in *Remembering Babylon*, released the year after the Mabo v Queensland case in 1992, which saw the High Court of Australia recognise native title in this country for the first time. While Germaine Greer opposed the book vehemently, calling it an "Objectionable Whitewash" (qtd. in Randall 143) and a "supremacist fantasy" (143), Veronica Brady found

Malouf's novel productively addressed the Mabo challenge, reinforcing the idea that *terra nullius* "has no standing" as an argument (qtd. in Randall 143). Peter Craven and Peter Otto also dismiss Greer's arguments, with Otto finding the character Gemmy, whom Malouf uses to represent a hybrid version of indigeneity, a "catalyst for" the "disorientation intrinsic to the colonial experience" (qtd. in Randall 143). From a postcolonial perspective, Gemmy could be read as a device to bridge two cultures that often read the world in different ways, an attempt to constructively write "in between".

And what of Peter Carey's more recent attempt, his "first", to tackle the topic of colonisation in Australia? In Carey's epilogue, he states that he consulted Steve Kinnane – an academic, author and Marda Marda man from the East Kimberley – but his decision to write on this subject was still questioned by some critics. In an *Irish Times* review of *A Long Way From Home* by Peter Carey, Arminta Wallace asks:

> How does a white Australian novelist confront the question of the continent's colonial past and the violent dispossession of its original inhabitants? Does a non-Aboriginal author even have the right to tell stories steeped in Indigenous suffering?

A review in *The Independent* however notes of the novel that:

> This isn't Carey's first foray into the past, but this is the first time he's directly dealt with Aboriginal history, and *A Long Way From Home* is all the more powerful for it. He's long been concerned with illegitimacy in the form of (white) confidence tricksters and outlaws … but here it's culturally appropriated falsehoods that are called into question, and "horrendous" deeds brought to light. "It was said the real Australia is beautiful," thinks Irene at one point during the race, "but not by me." (Scholes)

Through protagonists Irene, a non-indigenous car racer confronting her nation's grim history, and Willy, a man unaware of his Aboriginal heritage until part way through the book, Carey exposes Australia's past without stepping directly into the shoes of a person who knows they are Aboriginal. If it is a literary sleight of hand to evade issues of appropriation, it is a subtle one; Carey is aware of the delicate ground he is treading.

Nevertheless, like Wallace's critique in the *Irish Times*, reviewer Natalie Quinliven writes of Irene and Willy, and of Carey himself, that, although these voices need to be heard

in order to retell Australia's history and shape its future, the question remains: is this his (Carey's) story to tell?

Perhaps the last word should belong to Carey himself who answered this charge in a review in the same newspaper:

> I've been thinking about this since at least 1985 and it has really governed a lot of what I've written in that time. And I realised as I was writing this book that, of course it's a black story. But it's also a white story. The whole situation only exists because of the British Empire. And to be a white Australian and not to imagine the invasion of the land and all of these things is sort of . . . well, disgusting. (Wallace, "Peter Carey: The Novel")

Returning to the creative component of this dissertation, the novel *Paris Savages*, and questions over the re-historicising of events with Aboriginal themes – if, as Langton says, "invisibility" is a form of racism, the question becomes not *should* a non-indigenous writer enter this space, as many commentators in this field suggest, but *how*.

Rehistoricising in practice and concluding remarks

Paris Savages is a creative investigation of how fiction might be used in attempting to retell the story of the three Badtjala performers – Bonny, Jurano and Dorondera – taken to Europe in 1882 for living exhibition. Importantly, it attempts to "de-other" the performers whose stories have been omitted from the history books, and to challenge the constructed stereotypes that shows like these left in the archives.

Paris Savages is based on thorough research of the archive of "human zoos", and of what is known of the visits by Aboriginal performers, in particular. The novel, while essentially a work of realist historical fiction, incorporates elements of experimental writing, drawing on the scant facts of the Badtjala group's time in Europe and including extracts of texts where they exist. The fictionalised characters of the novel, many of whom are based on historical figures (see the novel's afterword), interact with and respond to these texts, and to one another, in ways that enliven and animate the record, enabling performers' possible experiences to come to light. In this way, "new histories" are given an opportunity to be considered, and the previously voiceless can, via fiction, "answer back". This experimental writing of history is overtly speculative and constructed, imaginatively attempting to approach what is real by, as Hayden White says of an essay by Michel de Certeau, not just

writing about the actuality but what is possible (147). Such writing has the potential not simply to fill gaps in the record but to subvert historical stereotypes.

Sources reproduced in the novel include newspaper clippings, text from scientific journal articles, and diary entries of the Inuit man Abraham Ulrikab, as well as several lines of Badtjala legend, sourced with permission from the published books *The Legends of Moonie Jarl* and *Fraser Island Legends*, providing an authentic account of this material. Other material drawn from published materials on Badtjala culture and language has been fact checked by Badtjala artist and academic Dr Fiona Foley, and the language program of the Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation.

The novel includes Aboriginal characters as central figures, without speaking from their first-person point of view (except in dialogue), as Australian author Claire Coleman guided on *Radio National* ("The Great"). In addition to dialogue between the novel's Aboriginal characters and the central protagonist, Hilda, the fictional daughter of the German man known to have taken the Badtjala trio to Europe, there are sections in the novel where the Aboriginal man Bonny moves from the periphery of the story to the centre. In these experimental and overtly imaginative sections, the reader is brought into the attempt of a ghost storyteller to imagine Bonny's possible experiences, and that of his compatriots, all of whom have been historically voiceless, given the paucity of sources of knowledge in performers' viewpoints as noted by various authors (Qureshi 9; Thode-Arora, "Hagenbeck's" 173). Both Hilda and Bonny, through exposure to the "other", inhabit a version of a hybrid or "ambivalent" space as described by Bhabha (37), unsettling the dichotomies of "civilised" versus "savage", "European" versus "indigene", "settler/visitor" or "coloniser" versus "colonised".

The exegesis hypothesises that realist historical fiction that includes what I am calling "an informed and overt reimagining" may help to deconstruct and contest the idea of the "savage" perpetuated through a Eurocentric telling of ethnographic exhibitions. Such fiction may include elements of experimental writing. *Paris Savages* uses mixed genre writing: the combination of non-fiction and existing texts (newspaper articles, scientific journal extracts, Badtjala legends) with new fiction. In addition, the novel employs aspects of fictocriticism, particularly characters' imaginative responses to and interactions with these texts, as well as to historical events and theoretical concepts of the constructed "other". While Hilda is, for the most part, "of her time", and postcolonial theory in the novel is largely implicit (Smith 210), she grows to unmask the colonial gaze that she herself succumbed to and perpetuated. This approach is consistent with what Helen Flavell writes of fictocriticism, in that it "interrogates

the violence of representation and explores what is left out and/or misrepresented through that process". The topic is highly relevant given the contemporary debates outlined in this dissertation about who has the right to speak for whom, especially on subjects involving "marginalised" groups.

CONCLUSION

By the late nineteenth century, "human zoos" had evolved to become mass spectacles attracting millions of viewers in Europe and America. In the accompanying scientific examinations – whereby performers were known to be publicly examined and measured – views about the biological "inferiority" or "superiority" of various races were developed and cemented in the public consciousness. Consequently, ethnographic shows saw social and scientific racism collude, intentionally or otherwise, to create the idea of the, often "lesser", "other" – a concept that was both a symptom of and a vehicle for colonialism, with modern-day consequences. Literature of the day, including advertising material, newspaper reports, essays, journal articles and fiction, did little to interrogate the representations. Instead, the writing of the day frequently reinforced constructed racial stereotypes, although there were notable exceptions in terms of representation, as well as in the treatment of performers. A key concern regarding the existing knowledge base about human exhibition in the period was the absence of performer viewpoints that either supported or contested European accounts.

The ramifications of the construction of racial stereotypes in the exhibition of living people remain to some extent today in the language and attitudes directed at people deemed "other". In an article in the English journal *Prospect*, Simon Lancaster argues that words such as "ape" – "apelike" was a common descriptor for black races used by nineteenth-century scientists including Rudolph Virchow – are still with us (30-31). Lancaster argues that such ideas "warped scientific thinking through the early twentieth century – and still warps social attitudes" (30). Lancaster quotes Jennifer Ebenhart from Stanford University, who found that "black men were far more likely than whites to be described with ape metaphors in criminal trials: 'whooping', 'aping', 'urban jungle'" (30), and refers to black footballers being on the receiving end of thrown bananas, as has occurred in Australia ("Football fan"). In her opening to *The White Possessive*, Aileen Moreton-Robinson describes the phenomenon of racism as follows: "Race as a socially constructed phenomenon is busy doing its work within Australia" (xi). She summarises Foucault's ideas on race and power: "Politics is war by other means. The ensuing conflicts between rulers and ruled increasingly involve a relation between a superior race and an inferior race" (128). Although there were exceptions in terms of the negative representation of performers in "human zoos", it is difficult to think of another global practice in which racial "othering" has been more apparent and influential in forming views of "race", particularly "race" attached to ideas of 'inferiority" or "superiority".

The largely forgotten entertainment phenomena of the "human zoo" was significant to the project of colonisation and remains relevant to modern-day concepts of "race" and the racial prejudice that ensues. An understanding of the Eurocentric origins of the "knowledge" that emerged as "stereotypes" from the shows is an important precursor to contesting the colonial history that exists in the archives, and re-writing misrepresentations. To achieve such rewriting/re-historicising, I argue there is a place to sensitively explore and overtly imagine the unrecorded voices/experiences of the performers themselves in a fictional context. This can best be achieved by fact checking indigenous content with descendants whose lives are still impacted by nineteenth-century portrayals. To leave the space blank, to not question the biased nature of the "knowledge" that has left deeply ingrained attitudes to race that persist today, does not seem a valid option.

My approach in *Paris Savages* has been along the lines that Tracey Banivanua Mar called for when she wrote:

> the empire's indigenous webs tend to flash in and out of the archival record. The links, connections and networks we seek to track were often subversive, frequently interrupted, and deliberately kept private from the imperial record. With such fleeting appearances, as Daniel Richter has demonstrated, sometimes only inference and the imagination, albeit consistent with available empirical evidence, can foreground indigenous peoples' historic thoughts, emotions, desires, anger and intentions. (qtd. in Banivanua Mar 3)

Here, Banivanua Mar is speaking of Richter's 2001 book *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*, which places native American people at the centre of the story and challenges historic assumptions about the settlement of North America. Likewise, *Paris Savages* seeks to find imaginative ways of retelling the story of "human zoos" that challenge the biased and often misrepresentative storytelling of the past, interrogating the myths perpetuated by an unquestioning Eurocentric viewpoint. The objective is not to speak for the performers, but to imaginatively explore the possibilities of their experiences in a way that highlights the silenced stories of the past.

NB The novel *Paris Savages* (pgs 0-247) is under permanent embargo and not to be published online. The exegesis (pgs 1-64, 248-260) can be published after one year.

Paris Savages

Novel permanently embargoed

Afterword and acknowledgements

The novel component of this dissertation is inspired by real events, however it is a work of fiction.

Historically, "Human zoos" were big business in Europe and America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In some cases, people considered to be exotic performed behind fences, while in others, the appeal was to have people displayed intimately, without fences and within touching distance. In Carl Hagenbeck's European 'anthropozoological shows', the focus of *Paris Savages*, performers were often displayed with their animals, with a focus on showing the activities of daily life as outlined in the research of Dr Hilke Thode-Arora (*Fur fünfzig Pfennig*). Other showmen, such as P.T. Barnum in America and Farini in Europe, were more sensational. Farini marketed a young girl 'Krao', who had the hair disorder hypertrichosis, as a missing link between monkey and man. P.T. Barnum showed Australian Aboriginal troupes in America as cannibals, as outlined in Roslyn Poignant's *Professional Savages*. While there has long been a fascination with the 'other', it could be argued that the exhibition of people from foreign lands in the late nineteenth century had significant impacts on views of 'race'. And, in cases where colonised peoples were represented as 'inferior', exhibitions conceivably made the act of colonisation seem more palatable in the eyes of some audience members. What sort of society shows fellow human beings in this way?

Various texts on the subject of "human zoos" informed the novel, including *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires* (Blanchard et al.), *In the Footsteps of Abraham Ulrikab* (Rivet), *The Diary of Abraham Ulrikab (Lutz), People on Parade (Qureshi)* and the catalogue and website of the 2012 Paris exhibition *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage*.

Sadly, many exhibited people died from diseases such as tuberculosis or smallpox. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation's radio documentary *Cast Among Strangers* reported that, of the twenty Aboriginal people exhibited in Europe in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, fifteen died of tuberculosis. Others, such as Carl Hagenbeck's entire group of Inuit brought to Europe in 1880 from Labrador, died of smallpox (Rivet). Not all experiences and representations, however, were negative. Dr Hilke Thode-Arora's research reveals that the groups of Somalis who visited Hagenbeck's Thierpark in Hamburg made repeated journeys and willingly returned with other members of their families, making performing their paid careers (Pers. Interview).

Overwhelmingly, however, the story of human zoos is a story half-told. There is largely silence concerning the views of the performers themselves. What did they think about being exhibited, and what were the circumstances surrounding their transportation? Exceptions include a rare diary of one of the Labrador Inuit shown at Hagenbeck's Thierpark in Hamburg. The diary of Abraham Ulrikab was translated from German and made available in English by Dr Hartmut Lutz and students at the University of Greifswald. Research in Norway by Cathrine Baglo has also revealed a more nuanced understanding of Sami performers' experiences in Europe, with indications of some agency on the part of performers regarding living conditions and wages ('Rethinking Sami Agency'). Nevertheless, it is likely that in most cases of human exhibition, the power balance between performer and showman remained unequal. Research undertaken for this dissertation suggests the experiences of performers varied widely depending on the intentions of the impresarios and the scientists involved, the origin of the performers, and the country in which they were shown.

Paris Savages draws on research conducted for this dissertation in Australia, France and Germany on the wider topic of ethnographic exhibition, as well as the scant facts gathered about the K'gari group in particular. Bonny/Bonangera was, as discussed in the exegesis, one of three Badtjala people who travelled to Europe in 1882 with the German engineer Louis Müller. Dorondera and her uncle Jurano/Durano were the other two. Other historical figures were the nine Aboriginal people taken from north Queensland's Hinchenbrook and Palm Islands, first to America and then to Europe, by the infamous and self-confessed manhunter R.A. Cunningham. In *Paris Savages*, I have brought Cunningham's journey to Europe forward by a year, also the quoted and abridged version of the letter by P.T. Barnum sent to agents worldwide, held at the Smithsonian Institution Archives and reproduced in *Professional Savages* (qtd. in Poignant 58). I have invented the scene where the two groups meet one another at Paris' *Jardin d'Acclimitation*. Other people described in this novel, including Abraham Ulrikab and his family, the 'Sinhalese', Zulus, the 'Feugians', the 'Laplanders' and the 'Samoyeds' also existed. Also true were many of the scientists mentioned: Professor Rudolph Virchow; biologist and physician Ernst Haeckel, whose views on evolutionary racism, Stephen Jay Gould writes, contributed to the rise of Nazism (78); Léonce Manouvrier; Ernest Chantre; and Adolf Bernhard Meyer. In several instances, I have quoted recorded words. Barnum's advertisement about 'cannibals' was taken from an 1883 edition of the *Advance Courier* reproduced in *Professional Savages* (qtd. in Poignant 91). Dickens' account of the Zulus exhibited in Hyde Park was taken from 'The Noble Savage' in *Household Words* (337). Virchow's comments about Bonny and Dorondera being 'excellent

specimens' comes from an 1883 scientific journal article written by the professor himself (190). Virchow's opening address at the Panoptikum and his description of Dorondera making a 'virginal impression' include quotations from the publication *Das Ausland* (1038). Guido Adler's quote about the development of music was taken from his 1885 writings, digitised by Digizeitschriften (18); and Manouvrier's comments about difficulties examining the 'redskins' at Paris' *Jardin d'Acclimatation* is a variation of an account quoted in *Human Zoos: The Invention of the Savage* (qtd. 168). I have drawn from Gabi Eissenberger's finding of a report in the *Magdeburger Zeitung* that criticised "human zoos" (qted. in Poignant 118), as well as from newspaper reports (*Evening News* and *Cleveland Herald*) on Cunningham's troupe (qted in Poignant 100-1). Bonny was seen with a group of 'Samoyeds' in the Place Carnot, Lyon, France, and the novelty of that association was noted in a newspaper report ('Les Samoyèdes'). A month later, a record of Bonny casting a *bar'gan* (boomerang) and inspiring a military ballistics expert in bullet design appeared in the publication *Le Salut Public* ("Le Boomerang" 2). An excerpt of this account, the last sighting of Bonny, appears in *Paris Savages* (thanks to a translation by France Rivet). Virchow's 1880 *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* description of the Inuit group appears in English in France Rivet's *In The Footsteps of Abraham Ulrikab* (qtd. in Rivet 107-133). Castan was indeed the owner of the Berlin Panoptikum and St Hilaire the director of the *Jardin d'Acclimitation* in Paris in that period. 1883 was a busy year at the *Jardin* with four ethnic shows attracting 900,000 visitors. While Bonny, Dorondera and Jurano are known to have visited Hamburg, Hannover, Leipzig, Dresden, Cologne, Basel and Lyon (at approximately the months indicated in the novel), there is no evidence of them being at the *Jardin d'Acclimitation*, however this was a regular touring venue for Hagenbeck's troupes, so it is plausible that they went there. There is also evidence Bonny performed in Geneva (thank you, France Rivet). Although the Hagenbeck archives do not include a listing of Bonny and his compatriots, Hagenbeck is listed as the tour director of the K'gari group in a Dresden newspaper article, the *Illustrirte Zeitung* (238). The article, an excerpt of which is quoted in *Paris Savages*, describes Bonny and Jurano/Durano's performances at the Dresden zoo. The Queensland state archives list a man named Sheridan who called for Fraser Island to be made a reserve for the Badtjala. Louis Müller was a German engineer who had lived in Australia (for eighteen years, rather than the six described in the novel), before taking Bonny, Jurano and Dorondera to Europe (*Das Ausland* 1037). It is not known how willing Bonny, Dorondera and Jurano were to travel with Louis Müller, although the *Das Ausland* article reveals a level of trust between Müller and Bonny, with Müller reporting that he felt he could 'rely on Bonny under all circumstances' (1038). The

same article reveals casts were made of Bonny and Jurano in Dresden by A.B. Meyer (1037). However, archival research that Dr Birgit Scheps and I carried out in Dresden revealed that casts held in Dresden of Bonny and Dorondera were in fact made at Castan's Panoptikum. The holdings list also included a cast of Jurano (made after life, i.e., a death mask), although we did not find this cast. The ABC radio documentary notes that Jurano and Dorondera fell ill in Cologne and were admitted to hospital (AWAYE), but, despite further searching, the fate of all three remains unknown. A record from Castan's Panoptikum reveals that Jurano was also admitted to the Berlin Charité. A rare, full body cast was made of Bonny in Lyon in the museum described in *Paris Savages*. On occasion, the plaster used for body casting and in sculpture was contaminated with lime, which burned the skin (AWAYE). As noted above, the last sightings of Bonny were in France where he was performing alongside a group of "Samoyed" people from the northern Arctic. (Note: The statue described in the Place Carnot is real, although I have altered the dates slightly.) The remainder of Bonny's story, as told in this novel, is fiction.

In 2014, the Australian Federal Court granted the Badtjala (Butchella) people land rights to Fraser Island, and in April 2017, the island formally adopted its original name, K'gari. England's Prince Harry used the name K'gari in his address from the island in October 2018 where he took part in a Badtjala ceremony.

Badtjala spirit names, lessons and legends referred to in the novel have as their source the book, the *Legends of Moonie Jarl*, written by Badtjala man Wilf Reeves and illustrated by Olga Miller. The stories of the boomerang and the Jun Jaree have been quoted verbatim with the kind permission of Badtjala man Glen Miller, whose uncle was Wilf Reeves and mother Olga Miller. The legend of the formation of K'gari is summarized with permission from *Fraser Island Legends* by Olga Miller (1-2). Badtjala words come with permission from the recorded dictionary of Shirley Foley (courtesy of Badtjala artist and academic Dr Fiona Foley who also provided the word '*wong*' for eugarie), as well as Jeannie Bell's *Dictionary of the Gubbi-Gubbi and Butchella Languages* (1994) and *Dictionary of the Butchulla language* (2004) with the permission and kind assistance of the Korrawinga Aboriginal Corporation. My thanks to Dr Fiona Foley for reading drafts and checking the accuracy of material relating to the Badtjala and K'gari, a most beautiful place I had the privilege of visiting twice. Additional sources that informed the novel include *The Badtjala People: a cultural and environmental interpretation of Fraser Island, a unique land and seascape to which we belong* (Foley, S.), *Princess K'gari's Fraser Island* (Williams), and the Ronan Films documentary *Secret and Sacred*. Information on the correlations between plant flowering

times and hunting/gathering comes from Winterbotham, L.P. ‘Recollections of Willie McKenzie’ Occasional Papers in Anthrolology. No. 8. and Farwell’s 1974 *The Sun Country* (qted in Williams 14). Information on K’gari plants and uses was also drawn from the Queenland Government’s Department of Environment and Science website which cites personal communication with Page, M (qtd. in “Butchella Culture”).

My thanks also to Claire Brizon (*Musée des Confluence*) for enabling me to visit the cast of Bonny in Lyon and for her research on this and other casts (Brizon); to Ann Lyneah Curtis (Masquerade Life Casting) for information on life casting in plaster; to Klaus Gille for showing me archival photographs of the Hagenbeck shows and taking me to the location of the site of the old Hagenbeck Thierpark in Hamburg; to Dr Hilke Thode-Arora for discussions in Germany about ethnographic exhibtions, for translations, for her original research about *völkerschauen* in Germany (*Fur fünfzig Pfennig*), and for reading the manuscript; to Dr Birgit Scheps for discussions about Aboriginal visitors to Europe, for showing me casts stored in Dresden, and for obtaining information about the Badtjala group’s perfomances at the Berlin Panoptikum; to France Rivet for assistance with locating newspaper evidence of Bonny’s travels in France and Switzerland and for her research on Abraham Ulrikab, which I gratefully draw from for *Paris Savages*; and to Dr Hartmut Lutz for permission to quote from Abraham Ulrikab’s diary. I am deeply grateful to my PhD supervisors Dr Danielle Wood and Dr Mitchell Rolls (University of Tasmania), who have both read numerous drafts, for their generous guidance and expertise; and to Associate Professor Anna Johnston (The University of Queensland) for valuable input. Thank you to the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania for support and camaraderie. Thank you to Arts Tasmania, the Graduate Research Travel Fund University of Tasmania and the Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship for financial assistance. I am grateful to the wonderful team at Ventura Press: Jane Curry for her belief in this book, her vision, support and energy; Zoe Hale for her attention to detail throughout production, Sophie Hodge, and editor Catherine McCredie. Thank you also to my brilliant agent Jeanne Ryckmans and to Simon and Schuster Australia. Finally, my heartfelt thanks to my friends and family, particularly Susan Bleakley and Alexa Moses for reading drafts, Karin Schaeffer for assistance with German translation, and to Craig, Laura and Calum, as always, for their patience and support.

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